

BATTLE
AND
VICTORY



BATTLE & VICTORY

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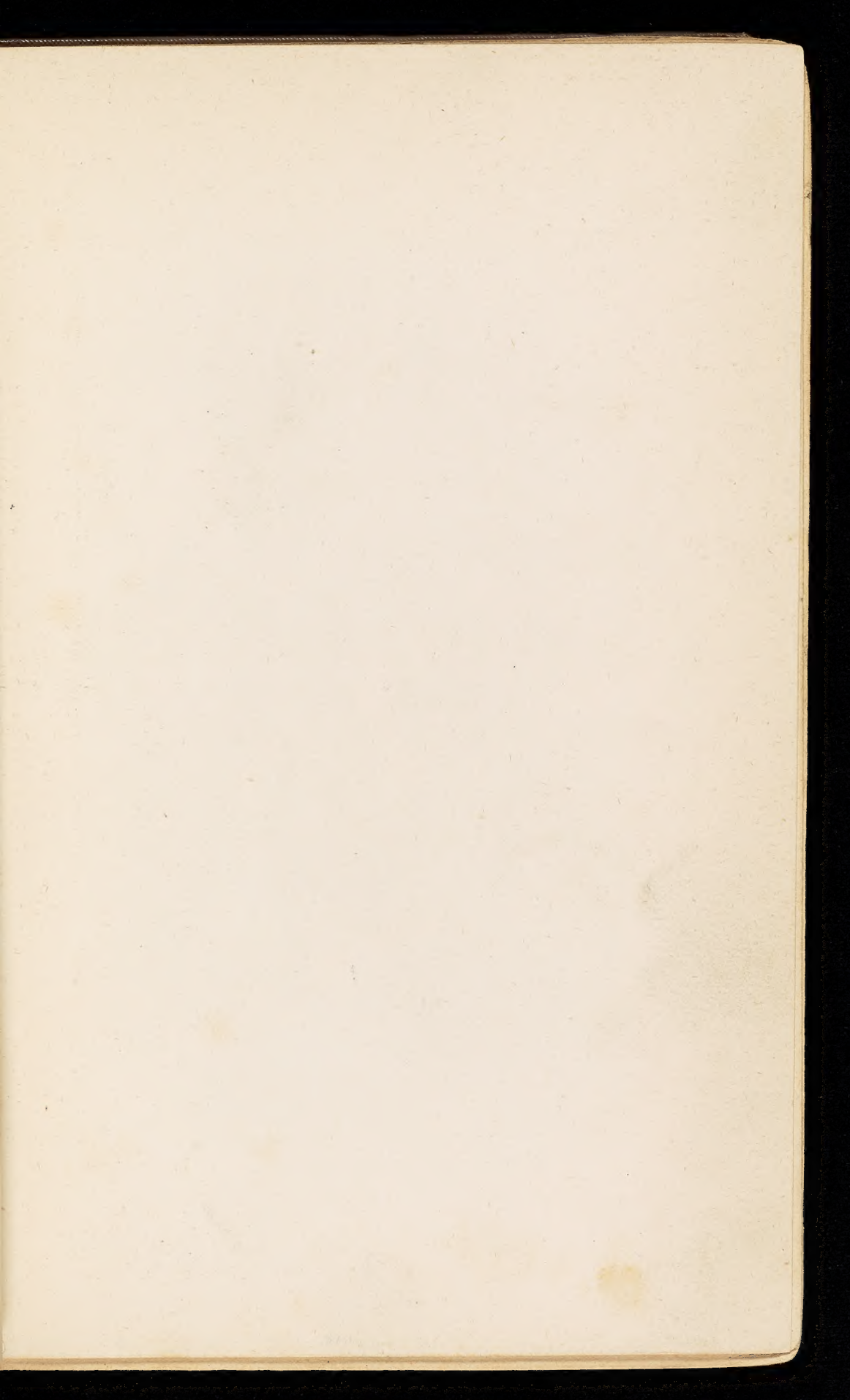
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SALVATOR AMONG THE BRIGANDS.

[Page 98.]

BATTLE AND VICTORY ;

OR,

STORY OF A PAINTER'S LIFE.

BY

MRS. C. E. BOWEN,

AUTHOR OF

"THE HOUSE ON THE BRIDGE," "BRIGAND TALES," ETC.



GRIFFITH AND FARRAN,

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BATTLE AND VICTORY.

CHAPTER I.

“**S**ALVATOR! Salvator! where are you?” cried the shrill but not unmusical voice of a young Italian girl, as she issued from a vine-covered house situated on the heights above Naples.

She ran down the sloping path, and then paused to look around for the object of her search, and again uttered her cry of “Salvator!”

A movement amongst some shrubs directed the girl's eye to the spot where a beautiful

boy of about nine years of age had been lying, and who was now slowly rising in obedience to her call. His countenance as he did so was expressive of annoyance at being disturbed from the contemplation of the magnificent scenes on which he was gazing.

“ You are a very naughty, good-for-nothing boy ! ” exclaimed the girl, whose likeness to him proclaimed her to be his sister. “ Why are you lying here when it is past ten o’clock ? You know very well that you are keeping Father Antonio waiting for you. It was just the same yesterday, when I had to come and hunt for you because you had slipped out of the way.”

So saying, Maria seized the child’s reluctant hand, and hastened with him up the steep ascent to their house, in the doorway of which stood an elderly woman making impatient gestures to them to be quick, and whose tongue was even more voluble than her daughter’s as she scolded the lad for his unpunctuality.

They entered the house, where yet another reproof awaited him from the lips of a tall friar in a white habit, who was standing by the window turning over the leaves of a book well known to Salvator, who detested the very sight of it, and who knew that the lesson given him to learn from it was most imperfectly known. He was aware also that his idleness day after day was quite wearing out the patience of worthy Father Antonio, his preceptor, who had borne so long with him, and to whom he was really attached; so it was with a feeling of shame he followed him into the adjoining room, and confessed he had not done more than merely read over the portion he had set him.

But we must give a few words of information respecting the family to whom we have introduced the reader, which consisted of five persons.

The boy Salvator was the only son of Guilia and Antonio Rosa, who lived on the pic-

turesque spot we have mentioned. Rosa was an artist and architect, who earned such a scanty livelihood by his pencil that he resolved his son should not follow the same profession. His mother's strong desire was that he should become a priest, and so his education had to begin early. For this purpose a friar from the neighbouring monastery had been engaged to instruct him in reading, writing, and Latin. Father Antonio came every morning to his young pupil, and did his best to bring him on in such studies as he thought suitable to his age. But he had undertaken a task of no small difficulty, for the boy hated his lessons, and neither coaxing or threats would induce him to apply to them with energy. His delight was to roam about the hill, revelling in the glorious landscape, which ever seemed to have fresh charms for him.

But what gave his father serious uneasiness was the fact that he was for ever sketching and drawing on such bits of paper as he could

find, and that he did it with an ease and rapidity that was very unusual in so young a boy. So great was Rosa's dread lest he should grow into an artist, that he caused paper and pencil to be put carefully out of his way, and he charged Father Antonio to give him such long Latin lessons to learn, and so many copies to write, that they would take up a great deal of his time, and, as he fondly imagined, turn his tastes into a different direction.

But nature was far too strong and unyielding to be thus mastered. Salvator never crossed the threshold of the house or looked out of window without enjoying the scenery around in a way none of his young companions did. Whilst they scrambled about, or played at games, he would lie down, or wander about by himself, watching the effects of the lights and shades on the hills, or the bay below. He would clasp his hands in ecstasy at the brilliant calm of the bright blue waters under a cloudless sky, or he

would look long and earnestly on their varying aspect under a stormy one. In fact, the child lived in a beautiful world of his own, which no one around him ever entered, or could have understood or appreciated, had they done so.

To return to Father Antonio, who was having a hard time of it with his troublesome pupil, whose thoughts were this morning anywhere but with his lessons. He outdid himself with inattention. The priest was a conscientious man who desired to do his duty by the lad.

"Salvator," said he at last, "I shall report you to your father, and tell him I must give you up. You take no pains with your Latin, and you are making no progress."

"I hate Latin," replied the boy.

"But you *must* learn it, or you can never be a priest."

"I don't want to be a priest; I want to be an artist, and take sketches," said Salvator.



FATHER ANTONIO AND HIS PUPIL.

"But it is your parents' desire that you should be a priest, and you ought not to set your mind against their wishes in the way you are doing. I fear me, Salvator, you will be a trouble to your family."

"I will be no trouble if they let me be an artist," said the lad, sullenly.

Father Antonio left the room and sought Rosa, who was painting in a small room fitted up as a sort of studio.

"I am come to tell you," said he, "that I can make nothing of your son. I am convinced he will never be a scholar, nor do I think his abilities lie that way. His brain is choked up with scenery and views, and there is no room left in it for Latin or Greek. He says he wants to be an artist, and who knows but what he might turn out a great one, if you allowed him to follow his inclinations?"

"I have said he shall not take to the beggarly profession of painting," exclaimed Rosa, "and I will keep to my resolve. Have I not

tried it myself, and do I not know that a man may toil and toil, day after day, the long year round, ay, and produce pictures that if he were to become the fashion would make him rich and great, but which, because he is unknown, he is compelled to sell for a tenth part of their value, or, perchance, not sell at all? No; Salvator shall profit by my experience. Let him not dare to say more about being an artist. He shall give his mind to books and become a scholar, and some day he will thank me for not giving in to his childish whims."

"I am not so sure that they *are* mere whims," said the friar. "I am no great judge, it is true, but it seems to me that the boy has considerable natural powers if not genius for the pencil, judging from scraps of sketches I have found in his Latin and copy-books, whereas for books and learning he appears to have a positive aversion. You cannot force Nature, and I am afraid you will find that Salvator will never take to scholarship."

"We will try what punishment will do," replied M. Rosa. "You are too indulgent to him, father; a little severity may do wonders."

Father Antonio shrugged his shoulders and elevated his eyebrows as he turned to leave the studio. He saw that it was of no use to say more, but from his heart he pitied the lad whose inclinations he thought were going to be cruelly forced into a wrong line.

Rosa was as good as his word. As soon as he had seen the retreating figure of the friar on his way to his monastery, he went to his son and severely reprimanded him for his idleness, declaring that he had worn out Father Antonio's patience, and that he meant to take him in hand himself. He doomed him to solitary confinement and hunger till the next morning, and even longer, unless he had by that time learnt perfectly whatever his tutor had left for him to do.

Salvator made no reply, but received his father's commands with a look of sullen in-

difference, and as soon as he was gone took up his station by the window, which fortunately for him commanded a fine view of Vesuvius and the surrounding country. That afternoon there was to be a grand fête in Naples, and it had been arranged that the family should go to it. It was, therefore, with some dismay that Salvator's mother and sisters heard of Rosa's determination to confine Salvator to one room and allow him no food.

In vain they petitioned for his punishment to begin a day later, so that he might go to the long looked for fête that afternoon. Rosa was firm; and, moreover, he forbade their going to see or talk to the culprit. He was resolved, he said, to try what fasting and confinement would do with him, before trying other means for making him apply to his studies. So his mother had to put back Salvator's best suit, which she had carefully brushed and laid out for him to wear at the fête, and it was with somewhat heavy hearts that she and her

daughters dressed themselves in their own gay Italian costumes and set forth for Naples. Rosa was a stern man, and his family were afraid of him. His two daughters, Maria and Carlina, amiable affectionate girls of fifteen and eighteen, dared not do more than give a parting nod to Salvator as he stood at the window looking after them when they left the house. His eldest sister, who was his favourite, contrived to forget something which obliged her to run back, and gave her an opportunity of making a few Italian gestures to him, that she well knew he would understand, expressive of her sorrow that he could not accompany them.

Although Rosa had, in his resolve to punish his son, given strict orders that the door of the room in which he was confined should be kept locked, certain it is, that either by accident or design it was left open that afternoon, and that by another accident or design a plate of good food was placed on a

table just outside the door. Salvator's whole attention, however, was absorbed for some time by the various groups of people as they descended the hill on their way to the fête, and also with noticing the unusually active state of Vesuvius, which was sending up columns of smoke and occasional jets of fire.

"I could make beautiful smoke like that," said the boy to himself, as he watched it curling itself into soft wreaths, and then slowly vanishing away. "Oh, if I had but father's brushes and some paper!"

He looked round the room in hope of seeing some scrap of paper on which to draw, with the bit of pencil he always kept in his pocket. Alas! the room was destitute of anything except a table, two or three chairs, and a few lesson books, already so scrawled over on their margins that he knew it was hopeless to search for space on which to draw an inch of smoke. The walls had been lately white-washed, and were unornamented by a single

picture, so anxious had M. Rosa been that the room should present no attractions to draw off his son's attention from his studies. A sudden thought struck the boy !

A little noise at the door made him look round. The handle was softly turned, and it opened to admit the head of Rosina Fanelli, a young girl who lived close by, and who was often with Salvator during his mountain rambles.

"I came to see why you are not gone to the fête with the others," she said. "I saw them go off without you a little while ago. Are you being punished?"

"Yes; father is angry because I didn't know my lesson for Father Antonio, so he says I am to be shut in here and have nothing to eat till to-morrow. I thought the door was locked."

"But as it's left open, and everybody is gone away, you may as well come out for a while," said Rosina.

"No, I won't come out," replied the boy;

"I'll do as father bid me. But, Rosina, I wish you would do something for me; I want you to burn the ends of some sticks and bring them here."

"Whatever are you going to do with them?" asked the girl.

"I'm going to make smoke."

"Salvator, what do you mean?"

"Go and get some bits of sticks, and I'll tell you all about it."

So off went Rosina, and soon returned with a handful of sticks, out of which Salvator selected a good many.

"Now, Rosina, please see if there is some fire burning in the kitchen stove."

"Yes, but its getting low," was the reply.

"Be quick then, and put all the ends of these sticks in it till they are quite black, and bring them to me."

Rosina did as she was bid. Salvator peeped through the door and watched her operations.

The plate of food stood temptingly near,

and Rosina would have had him empty it, reminding him how hungry he would be by next morning, but a proud sense of honour restrained the boy from doing so, though he strongly suspected it had been put there on purpose for him.

"Here are all the sticks quite black," said Rosina, handing them to him carefully lest they should soil her snow-white bodice and crimson petticoat, for she too was going to the fête, and had only run in to see how it fared with her favourite playfellow.

"Now tell me what you are going to do with them," said she. "You can't make smoke with dry sticks!"

"Yes I can, capital smoke; I can draw with them. I'm going to sketch Vesuvius on the wall; it will be better fun than going to the fête."

Rosina stared and wondered, but had no time to linger, for she knew she would be wanted; so off she flew to join her friends,

and tell them of poor Salvator's being in disgrace.

Meanwhile the object of her pity was actually capering with delight round the room, so charmed was he with his burnt sticks and with a new idea that had come into his head, viz., to make use of the fresh white walls to draw upon. There they were around him like a vast sheet of white paper. What could be better for his purpose, which was to make a large sketch of Vesuvius, and the other hill near it.

He seized a stick and, after taking a long look at his subject, began to draw. He soon became so entirely engrossed with his work, that hours fled like minutes ; and it was not till the fading light and the voices of the returning family interrupted him, that he remembered he had not even opened his Latin book, or copied out the task left him by Father Antonio.

He heard his mother pleading to be allowed

to take him something to eat, and his father saying that no one was either to give him food or to go near him, as he meant him to pass the night where he was. Salvator felt hungry enough, but he was a strong lad, and could stand a fast better than most children of his age. He had had a happy afternoon, in spite of circumstances, and he lay down on the floor to sleep, and no doubt dreamed of Vesuvius, burnt sticks, and smoke.

The next morning no Father Antonio appeared at the usual time, but in his stead came a monk, well known as Brother Bernado, a man of considerable importance for two reasons. He was of noble family, and had brought a large fortune to the monastery, which had been applied in part to the embellishing and painting of the building.

Brother Bernado was a great lover of art, and himself an artist of no mean power. When Father Antonio consulted him about Salvator, and told of the lad's desire to be a

painter, and his father's stern resolve that he should be educated for the priesthood, the good monk became so interested that he offered to go in his stead next day and hear Salvator's lessons, in order to judge of the child's powers himself, and also to have a pretext for speaking to Rosa about the folly of thinking he could punish his son into the love of learning.

He explained on his arrival at Rosa's house, that he had come to hear Salvator's lessons in place of the Father who was otherwise engaged, and he was at once taken to him. The Latin lesson was said, but after a fashion that would not at all have satisfied Father Antonio. The monk, however, winked at his blunders and mistakes, and, shutting up the book, was about to send the pale and exhausted boy to his breakfast, when his eye suddenly caught sight of a large sketch on the wall opposite the door. He looked at it attentively.

"Who drew that?" he inquired.

"I did," was the reply.

"Do you mean you did it quite by yourself?"

"Yes," said Salvator, hanging his head, expecting to be scolded; "I drew it yesterday with some burnt sticks."

"Ho, ho! my young signor, so you were at this work instead of your Latin, were you? No wonder you made so many mistakes. So you would like to be an artist would you?"

"I *will* be one some day," said the boy.

Brother Bernado said no more, but he took another look at the wall, and leaving the room, sought Rosa.

"I have come," said he, "to offer you some advice about your son's future. Let him be brought up to the profession his soul already craves after. He has a real genius for painting, and will one day be a great man if you do not crush that genius in the bud. Whilst shut up in yonder room yesterday he has drawn a sketch of which many an ad-

vanced artist would be proud, and that with no better materials than a burnt stick and a whitewashed wall !”

“ Then he has been at his tricks again,” exclaimed Rosa, “ instead of learning his lessons. He is incorrigible, but I will not give in. An artist’s profession is a lottery in which no child of mine shall stake his fortunes. His mother and I intend him for the priesthood ; that will at least give him food and clothing.”

The monk saw it was useless to say any more, so took his leave and returned to the monastery, where he told Father Antonio that Rosa was the most pig-headed fool he had ever met with, and the young Salvator, a lad of rare artistic power, which it could only be hoped would break forth hereafter, in spite of his father’s resolve to strangle it in its infancy.

Poor Salvator had to bear the full burst of his parents’ displeasure for what he had done. Rosa scolded because he had wasted his time. His mother mourned over the spoiling of her

newly washed wall, and both were angry with Rosina for supplying him with the burnt sticks.

After this things went on as before. Father Antonio continued to do his best with the boy, who gradually made more progress than he had dared to hope would be the case. Thus two years passed on, and at the end of that time his tutor told Rosa that he ought to go to college to be trained for the priesthood.

"Let him go to the Collegio Somasca in Naples, for some years," said he. "There he will have to study with others, which may create some amount of emulation in him. Moreover, he will not have his attention diverted by the beauties of nature, for the students' rooms look out on high walls, and he will have to put his head out of window in order to obtain even a glance at the sky."

It so happened that Salvator overheard part of this conversation, and he was filled with dismay. It was bad enough to be dunned

with Latin and Greek whilst living on their beautiful hill. But to be incarcerated within the walls of that sombre-looking college, in one of the narrowest and most gloomy streets of the city, would, he thought, be insupportable. He felt like a criminal about to be confined within the walls of a prison for years; yet he knew he must submit to his fate.

In those days (the incidents of which we are speaking took place in the early part of the seventeenth century), there was but little confidence between parents and children; and this family was no exception to the general rule. Rosa went to the principal of the Collegio Somasco, and made application for his son's admission; but finding that the expense would be beyond his means, he petitioned that he might be paid for out of certain funds, appropriated to the education of poor students. The circumstance of his having been a pupil of Father Antonio's had some weight with the principal, and he desired that the boy should

be sent to him that he might judge whether he would be likely to do honour to the college, if he were admitted on these terms.

When Rosa returned home he told Salvator to be ready to accompany him next day to see the principal, saying that there was great hope the result of the interview would be his admission as a student for six years. Salvator was silent, but his mother and sisters were full of joy at his prospects.

"My son will one day be a bishop," exclaimed Guilia Rosa, clasping her hands in ecstasy at the bare idea.

"Or perhaps a cardinal," said his sister, whose imagination soared still higher.

"Nay, say a pope, at once," said Rosa, with a smile; "wonders as great have come to pass before now. What say you, Salvator?" he added, turning to the lad, whose colour came and went fast during this conversation. "Should you not like to be a great man?"

"Yes," replied Salvator, "and I *will* be a

great man before I die ; but I do not care to be either bishop, cardinal, or pope."

"Then you are a young fool," said his father, "and don't know what you are talking about. It's time you went to college to learn more wisdom. Be ready to go with me to-morrow, and bid your mother and sisters good-bye, for if you are received it will be at once, and you will not return home again."

Salvator bit his lip, and pressed his hands together with the effort he made to keep back the tears which were ready to burst forth at that moment. He had an affectionate heart, and he loved his home and relations and his beautiful hill dearly. From all these he was suddenly to be cut off for years, to be shut up in a great prison-like building, pursuing distasteful studies by way of preparing for a distasteful profession, into which he could throw neither interest nor heart. He said nothing, however, but rushing from the house, ran till he reached a favourite spot

on the hillside, where, throwing himself down, he wept tears as bitter as were ever shed by boyhood.

When the first burst was over, he raised his head and looked around him at the well-known scene. The silvery bay at his feet, with its lovely islands, sleeping, as it were, on its bosom. The smoking mountain to the left, with light fleecy clouds floating above it, and deceiving the eye into believing them to be part of the smoke for ever rising from its crater. From all this he was about to be shut out, and doomed to what seemed to his disordered fancy almost a living death.

He would not go, he said to himself. Why should he not run away and seek his fortune in the wide world, as he had heard of other boys doing? The longer he pondered over the idea the stronger it grew, till it formed itself into a fixed resolution. He would go away secretly; whither he knew not, but somewhere, anywhere, so that he might still live

in sunshine and amongst trees and flowers, far away from the detested college, Somasca, with its high walls, and narrow windows, and long hours of confinement and study.

When he returned home his friends were glad to observe how much calmer he seemed, thinking he had grown reconciled to his new prospects. His mother and Maria busied themselves with the few simple preparations that were required for his change of life, whilst Father Antonio charged him to do his best when examined as to his attainments, feeling his own credit as tutor somewhat at stake. He assured him he had talent if he would but exert himself, and that though his father had set his face against his being an artist, he might be happy and prosperous in another vocation. He promised to go and see him occasionally, and departed, hoping the lad was more reconciled to his lot.



CHAPTER II.

THAT night, when all were slumbering in Antonio Rosa's home, Salvatore softly opened the window of his own room on the ground floor, and stepped out into the bright moonlit garden. He had put a few clothes into a small leather bag, and took nothing else except some pencils and paper and a paint brush or two; for, in spite of all discouragements he had persevered with his painting, and managed to get materials secretly. Even Father Antonio had sometimes helped him to the purchase of a few, for his father had strictly forbidden him ever to touch his.

With his bag slung over his shoulder, he

began to descend the hill, turning, however, more than once to take what he thought might be a last look at the little vine-covered house where he had spent both happy and unhappy hours, and he felt his heart yearning after those whom it might be long ere he saw again. He quickened his footsteps as daylight began to dawn, and, long before the hour when his disappearance would be discovered, found himself at some distance from Naples, and on the high-road to Castellamare and Sorrento, places he had often longed to visit as he looked at them in the far distance. He had heard Father Antonio speak of the beauty of Sorrento; of its orange groves and olive trees, and its deep gorges by the side of the Mediterranean; and so he turned his footsteps in that direction.

It was one of Italy's most lovely autumn days, sufficient in itself to bring a sense of enjoyment to Salvator as he trudged along, hour after hour, till actual fatigue and hunger

brought him to a standstill. He had several copper coins in his pocket, with which he bought some bread and fruit, and a good-natured Vetturino, seeing how tired he looked, gave him a lift in his empty vehicle for some miles, and shared his macaroni with him when they reached the village where he lived. He spent the night under a wide-spreading chestnut tree, sleeping as soundly as if on his own bed. In the morning he again started on his journey. Friends seemed to turn up for him as he went along. One gave him macaroni, another fruit, and a gentleman, whose horse he held, put a silver coin into his hand of sufficient value to provide food for two or three days. In Italy a boy can live on very scanty rations. The air and climate seem to be almost food in themselves; especially to one of such an artistic mind as our young hero, who was positively entranced by the splendid scenery of the magnificent road leading from Castellamare to Sorrento, which

can never be forgotten by those who have seen it, and which no description can do justice to for those who have not.

At length he reached Sorrento, that most picturesque of towns, overhanging the sea as it lies severed from the mainland on three sides by a gorge two hundred feet deep and fifty in breadth. Never, in after life, did Salvator forget the exquisite delight of gazing down into that wondrous gorge, with its dizzy depths, its lovely waving trees, and sparkling rills chasing each other till they reached the stream that runs murmuring along the bottom, and are finally lost in the blue waters of the Mediterranean.

Here also his eye took in the exquisite gracefulness of the masses of maidenhair fern which almost lined one side of the gorge ; whilst on the other flourished more abundantly long wreaths of dark trailing ivy, filling up the deep rents in the rock. He noted with an artist's eye the lights and shadows of the

wondrous depths, drinking all in with almost breathless earnestness, and wholly oblivious to other sights and sounds than those he was gazing upon. He was consequently not aware that he was an object of observation to a young man standing at a little distance, who was engaged in sketching. He was partly hidden by the corner of an old building, so had not been seen by Salvator, who started when a hand was laid upon his shoulder. He had not yet lost the fear of being discovered and compelled to return home and go to the college.

But it was not at all an alarming face that looked into his ; and it was a kind voice that said—

“You seem to enjoy the beauty of this spot, my lad ; is it your first view of it ?”

It was not immediately that Salvator replied, for he had to recall his scattered thoughts, which had been wandering in visionary regions.

At length he said, "Yes ; how wonderful it is down there !"

"Are you only just come to Sorrento ?"

"Yes ; I have walked here from Naples."

"And whither are you going ?"

"Alas ! I do not know."

"Have you no friends, no home ?"

"Yes, but——" He hesitated to say more to a stranger, yet his heart was longing for sympathy, and was all ready to open out to kindness.

His interrogator was greatly struck with the boy's countenance. It is said there is a silent freemasonry amongst kindred minds, and perhaps this caused these two to draw together, notwithstanding their difference in age. Both were lovers of nature in no common degree, and both had artist souls.

"Will you tell me your name, and where you live, my lad ?" said the stranger, putting his questions in another form.

Still Salvator paused before replying ; might

it not be dangerous, he thought, to tell any one about himself.

The stranger pressed him no farther, but asked if he would like to look at the sketch he was taking. It was a masterly hand that was making it. He opened a portfolio and showed him others. All Salvator's caution fled before his admiration. He soon told the stranger his whole history, and why he had run away from home. Francanzani, as his new friend was named, felt deep pity for the lad, and sympathized with his dread of being forced into a learned profession, so wholly foreign to his nature. Yet he could not deny that his father was right in calling an artist's profession a starving one, for he was himself struggling for a livelihood. But, though poor, he was happy and free; able to wander at will through the scenery he loved, and with the hope that he might, in time, make himself a name. However wrong Salvator might have been for running away from his fate, he

thought he should have been tempted to do the same under the circumstances, though he was too prudent to tell him so.

"And what are you going to do next?" he asked. "Where shall you sleep; and how shall you live?"

"I don't know yet; but I shall manage somehow."

"Well, suppose you come with me for a few days, and we will sketch together, and I will show you some of my drawings."

Salvator was full of gratitude at the proposal. Francanzani took him to a room he had hired in a small house belonging to a motherly, good-natured Italian woman, who promised to make up a second bed for her lodger's visitor.

The following fortnight was perhaps the happiest of Salvator's life. He and Francanzani used to wander together over the hills and amidst the orange grooves surrounding Sorrento, observing the varied colouring of

the Italian scenery and the different effects of morning, mid-day, and evening on the landscape. Francanzani became more and more interested in his young companion, and convinced that, if allowed to follow his own inclinations, he would become a great artist. He was amazed at the freedom and boldness of his attempts to sketch and colour what most struck his eye, and felt his own generous nature stirred with a desire to help him on. Yet how to do so was not an easy matter, for he could not afford to keep and teach him himself as he would like to have done, nor was he altogether satisfied that it was right to encourage him in hiding himself from his family. He was himself going to spend the following winter in Rome, in company with another artist who was to join him there, so it could not be very long before he must part with the interesting and talented boy he had so strangely met, and for whom he already felt almost a brother's affection.

But whilst Salvator was thus revelling amidst the lovely scenes surrounding Sorrento, every day learning something of the great art after which he craved, his people at home were filled with consternation at his disappearance.

For a few days his father did not trouble much about him, feeling sure that hunger would bring him home. His mother was less sanguine ; she dearly loved her boy, of whom she always declared she had from his birth a presentiment that he would one day be a great man if he would only take to his books. The good woman was able to detect the latent genius in him, though she mistook the direction in which it lay.

When a week had gone by, and still no news of him could be gathered, she became terrified, and as for his sisters, Maria and Carlina, they were constantly in tears and putting up prayers to the Virgin that he might be found. The good fathers at the

monastery, too, were really concerned, having known him from a little child; and Father Antonio in particular was troubled, for he was fond of the lad, much as he had plagued him. He took the trouble to write to several of the neighbouring monasteries to ask for inquiry to be made whether such a boy as he described Salvator had been seen. Knowing him as he did, he thought he would probably be found wandering among the hills or on the sea-coast.

One day he came to Rosa with a letter in his hand. "I think," he said, "that we have traced our young wanderer. I have heard from a friend, who is one of the canons of the cathedral at Sorrento, that a boy, answering to my description of your son, is at present staying with a travelling artist in Sorrento. He says his name is Rosa, and he spends his time in going out sketching with the artist he is living with."

"It is sure to be Salvator and no other,"

exclaimed Rosa, starting up. "He has met with some one who is doing him all the harm in the world by feeding his insane desire to earn his bread by painting. I must be off after him without loss of time. The young rascal! to think of all the trouble he has given us, whilst he is quietly enjoying himself in the way of all others he most delights in. The young gentleman will find college somewhat a contrast to his present mode of life."

"Well, don't be too harsh with him, if it turns out to be Salvator," said kind-hearted Father Antonio. "Gentle dealing will do most with the boy; at least, so I always found."

There was a small vessel plied every day between Naples and Sorrento, which took articles of provision and passengers for a small sum. It went at an early hour in the morning, and returned the same evening on calm days. It was settled that Rosa should go by this the following morning, and make search for

his truant son, returning either the same day or the following one. Many were the conjectures all that evening, as to whether he would really bring back Salvator, or whether the boy, about whom Father Antonio's friend had written, might not turn out to be somebody else?

The following morning proved to be as bright and fair as Italian days usually are at that time of year, and at an early hour Francanzani and Salvator sallied forth, as was their custom, with their sketching materials. Francanzani was engaged in making a drawing of the island of Capri, from a spot at a considerable height above Sorrento. Salvator sat beside him, watching each stroke of his friend's brush, his eye sparkling with excitement as he drank in every word of instruction which fell from Francanzani's lips. He was himself doing the same sketch, and a less generous mind than that of his instructor's might have felt some touch of jealousy at

seeing how closely his boy pupil seemed treading on his heels. But Francanzani had himself too much talent not to recognize and be delighted with real genius when he found it existing, as undoubtedly it did exist, in the lad he was befriending.

"Bravo, Salvator!" he exclaimed, as, after a long silence in which both had been deeply engaged with their work, he stopped to look at what Salvator had done. "Bravo, boy! you have managed that sea capitally; but take care how you lay on any more blue, don't get it too dark. Those stone pines in the foreground are very good. Truly you are made of the true artist stuff!"

"And when I grow up and have become a real great artist, such as I mean to be, I shall come to you and give you half of all the money I make, in return for your kindness to me now," said Salvator, whose heart was glowing with love and gratitude to his kind friend.

"Nay," replied Francanzani, laughing; "let us hope that I shall not need such generosity. I, too, have my dreams of ambition and greatness, and hope one day to become rich and famous; but if I fail, then, perhaps, I shall be able to shine a little by borrowed lustre, as the friend of the great master Salvator Rosa!"

Salvator coloured, for he thought Francanzani was reproving his somewhat conceited-sounding speech by laughing at him. He was silent for a while, and then said—

"Should you not be pleased, signor, to see all the Latin and Greek books in the world burnt?"

"Assuredly not, Salvator. There are rich and rare beauties to be found in them, which are of the greatest help to painters. Poetry and Painting are sister arts, as you will one day understand. Let me advise you not to throw away all you have learnt to the winds, or you will deeply regret it. If you would be

an artist of the first class you must educate your mind in *all* ways, not merely attend to the study of painting. I have been thinking a great deal about you the last few days, because I shall soon be leaving Sorrento for Rome, and before I go I should like to have something arranged about you. Now, shall I tell you what I think will be the best plan ? ”

“ Yes,” said poor Salvator, turning aside his head that Francanzani should not see his downcast countenance, for something within seemed to tell him what he was going to say.

“ Well, then,” said his companion, “ I think you ought to go home and set your parents’ minds at ease about you, for they doubtless are in great trouble at your disappearance. Then, as to the College Somasca, you should try and reconcile yourself to the thoughts of going there, for it will be greatly to your advantage. If I had had the chance of such

an education, I should be richer in mind and thought than I am. You are not old enough yet to be able to understand me altogether, perhaps; but, some day, you will remember this conversation, and acknowledge that I was right. Besides, Salvator, if you become an ecclesiastic, as your father desires you should, it need not of necessity involve your laying aside your pencil. Be an artist priest, if you will."

Salvator did not reply. He knew he was receiving good advice, and that he ought to follow it. But as yet he could not grasp the idea of Latin and Greek being a help to a painter. Moreover, he shrank from encountering his father's anger at his having run away. All the liberty and pleasure of his life during the last month had been a bad preparation for a return to studies for which he had no taste; above all, if they were to be prosecuted in the gloomy chambers of the College Somasca.

Francanzani said no more, but left what

had passed to work on the boy's mind. He was the more anxious that he should return home when he himself left Sorrento, because he had serious misgivings in his own mind whether he was doing right in sheltering Salvator, knowing his history as he did. Yet he felt it would be treacherous to betray him to his friends, and desired rather that he should go back to them of his own accord.

That afternoon, when they returned home, they were told that a stranger was waiting to see them, and, almost before he had time to conjecture who it might be, Salvator stood in the presence of his father!

Rosa was, as we have seen, a stern man, and he had real cause for displeasure with his runaway son, whom he at once sharply reproved for having thus played truant. Salvator, however, so frankly acknowledged his fault, and so humbly craved for forgiveness, that he soon relented, and Francanzani skillfully put in a few words, which had a sooth-

ing effect on the father, who told him he would overlook his conduct on condition he turned over a new leaf as regarded his studies.

When he heard how kindly Francanzani had fed and sheltered him since they first met, he thanked him courteously, and so much did the young man win upon him during the short time they were together, that he gave him a cordial invitation to pay them a visit whenever he should come to Naples.

The possibility of seeing his friend again cheered Salvator, for Francanzani assured him it was his intention to reside for a time in Naples, as he was desirous of taking a number of sketches in that beautiful neighbourhood, and possibly he might take up his abode there as a home constantly in the summer months.

Then, bidding each other an affectionate farewell, they parted; and Rosa hurried his son through the curious old town, with its high walls and orange gardens, to the boat, which he was fearful of missing, and which,

indeed, they only just managed to catch, as it was setting sail to return to Naples.

Arrived at home, a perfect torrent of affectionate reproaches awaited the truant Salvator, as might be expected, from his mother and sisters, when he entered the house with his father. One moment he was embraced and kissed and cried over, and the next he was vehemently scolded and found fault with for having given them such a fright. The pleasure of getting him back, however, certainly predominated over their anger; and when he had told of all Francanzani's kindness they were rapturous in their expressions of gratitude to him. Maria, in particular, expressed her hope that he would come and see them, especially when Salvator described him as young and handsome as well as agreeable, and a clever artist; for she was a bit of a coquette, and was quite aware that she was considered a beauty; and no wonder, for few girls in her neighbourhood could compete

with her in this respect. Her soft brown complexion, lustrous eyes, and coils of magnificent black hair being uncommon even in that land of Italy, where beauty is so usual amongst its daughters.

Rosa had no intention of letting his son remain at home an hour longer than was necessary; and within a week after his return he told him to be ready to accompany him to see the principal of the college, in the hope that he might be at once admitted as a foundation scholar.

The evening before they went, his mother took her son aside, and with much seriousness and affection told him some incidents connected with his birth, which she hoped would have a great effect upon him, young as he was, and help to reconcile him to the lot they had decided upon for his future.

"Listen to me, my son," she said, "that you may better understand our motives in what we are doing. For some time after our mar-

riage, it was a great grief to your father and me that we had no son. To myself in particular it was a sorrow. Your sisters were both born within four years after our marriage ; but time went on, and it seemed likely that they would be our only children. I besought the Virgin that she would listen to my prayers. At length I made a solemn vow to her that if she sent me the blessing of a son, I would dedicate him to the service of Holy Church from the moment of his birth, and call his name 'Salvator,' after our Blessed Saviour. The Virgin heard me, and you were sent to gladden our hearts. Your father had acquiesced gladly with my making the vow of dedicating you to the Church, not only by way of pleasing Our Lady, but because he knew how uncertain and miserable is the income that can be made by the generality of artists. He had toiled himself for years, and so had his brother, likewise an artist. Both had talent, but both strove in vain for the

success that only awaits those who have the happiness to become famous through some accident of fortune, or by the possession of such talent as will push its own way in spite of all difficulties caused by poverty and obscurity, which too often hedge up the artist's road to fame."

"But, mother," here broke in Salvator, who had listened with deep attention to all she had been saying, "why should not *I* become one of those, who, having pushed their way through difficulties, have become great men? Oh, mother, I should not mind enduring hardships or poverty for years, if only I might follow my own will; I do not want to be a priest. I should not be a good one, for I know that men do best in the profession they like best. They often turn to it at last after having spent years of their youth at something else. Francanzani told me that the great Guido was educated for a musician; Andrea Sartori was a tailor, Claude Loraine

a baker, and Michael Angelo was destined to be a weaver ; but they all *ended* in becoming great painters."

"And if a priest, *you* may be a painter also, Salvator. Did not Francanzani tell you also about Fra Angelico, who lived in a convent, and whose lovely saints and angels cover the walls of St. Marco, in Florence, and are preserved with the greatest care ; and strangers come from far to see them and many others of his works ?"

"But, mother," replied her son, "I have no wish to paint saints, and angels, and virgins. I never think about them when I imagine myself a painter. No, I want to go wandering about the world, drawing landscapes in which are rocks, and trees, and skies. I want to climb mountains, and see the effects of the sun rising and setting on the world below me. I long to scramble down precipices and deep gorges, to ramble through big forests, and wade amongst streams. I would like to watch

violent storms and hurricanes, such as hurl up trees by the roots and dash huge stones down the mountain side. I must hear the thunder roar amongst the hills, and see the lightning flying through the valleys." And, as he spoke, the boy's dark blue eye dilated, and his whole form appeared to expand with enthusiasm. For the moment he seemed no longer a boy; but a youth with the glow of genius around him. "Let me but go forth to watch nature, mother," he continued, "and you shall see how I will paint, when I have well studied her; and then, mother, you shall be proud of your son."

But Guilia Rosa only shook her head, whilst she passed her hand fondly over his dark curls. She was an affectionate mother, and it was painful to her to force her son's inclinations in the way they were doing; but she knew his father was resolved; and, moreover, there was her own vow of dedication at his birth, which must be kept. She was a woman, too,

of ordinary though religious turn of mind ; and she was incapable of detecting the kind of genius that was part of Salvator's very soul and was struggling to find vent unknown to himself. She looked on his words as dictated by a boyish desire to ramble about and get away from books, and they merely served to convince her that the sooner he was under strict discipline the better for him.

"My boy," she said, "you talk as one who has had no experience of life. It is natural that you should want your liberty, but you must be content to do like others of your age. Remember, too, how I dedicated you at your birth to the service of Holy Church and to the Blessed Virgin. I trust you will not only try to become reconciled, but strive to do honour to the college, if you are admitted."

Salvator said no more. He felt that his doom was fixed, and that it would be useless to contend any farther.

The next morning, with a very heavy heart, he bade adieu to his mother and sisters, and he and his father started on their walk down the hill to Naples. Guilia Rosa and her daughters stood at the house door looking after them, and wondering whether they would ever again see Salvator clad in the costume so well suited to set off his unusual beauty.

The dress of a Neapolitan youth, in those days, consisted of a velvet or cloth doublet and breeches, with red stockings and a mantilla of black velvet slashed with some bright colour. On the head was usually worn a small black velvet cap with a feather, from under which the hair fell in long curls over the shoulders.

Few lads could compete with Salvator in personal appearance, and it was not without an emotion of pride that his mother thought of his going to be presented to such an important personage as the principal

of the College Somasca. She felt sure he could not but find favour in his eyes, and then she imagined him doffing his present gay suit for the sombre black habit of the college student, and in all probability her ideas floated onwards till she saw him arrayed in a bishop's mitre or a cardinal's hat. When he was no longer in sight, she retired to the little shrine in her room, and, kneeling down, offered up fervent prayers that he might become "*Il miracole del suo secolo.*" (The wonder of his age.)

Those who have visited Naples, and ascended the sunny heights behind it, will not have forgotten the scene through which Salvatore and his father had to pass as they descended the winding downward path, amidst terraces of orange and lemon trees, laden with rich yellow fruit and delicate blossoms, whose fragrance was wafted into the far distance, and which then as now were a source of considerable emolument to their owners. After these came

vineyards, from which the fruit had just been gathered, followed by high-walled gardens, houses, chapels, and shrines. And then the hum of the great city broke upon their ears, growing louder and louder, harsher and harsher, till they at length reached the wide street called the Strada Toledo, which may be considered as the pulse of Naples; the thoroughfare where its chief bustle and noise and excitement is concentrated. There, as in the present day, the din and tumult of life raged without ceasing. Carriages of a heavier construction than the modern ones moved along as fast as their cumbrous build would permit; vendors of street wares kept up their never ceasing cries; beggars in countless numbers, and with every species of deformity, craved for alms, undaunted by the repulses they constantly met. Monks and nuns, priests and scholars, in every variety of habit, mixed with the numerous foot passengers, who thronged the street in such masses that it was difficult to move

along. And thus has human life swarmed in the Toledo generation after generation for hundreds of years, so little altered as a great moving mass, that probably if one who lived long ago were now to return suddenly, he would scarcely believe that millions of human beings have passed away since his day, and that the vast multitude hastening to and fro is not the very same one amongst which he himself once mingled.

Rosa led his son down this street for a considerable distance, and then turned into one on the left hand, which brought them into a quieter part of the city. After passing through several narrow passages and alleys, they emerged into a large square with an old stone fountain in the middle of it. Three sides of this square were occupied by either warehouses or public offices, and the whole of the fourth was taken up by a long, tall, gloomy-looking building, with innumerable narrow windows, extending along the front and in

the roof. The lower ones were invisible from the square, owing to a wall which was built in front of the college, giving it a prison-like appearance. In the middle of this wall were the entrance gates, tall and strong, and studded with large iron headed nails. Such was the building known as the "Collegio della Congregazione Somasca."

They crossed the square, the only object of interest, in which was the quaint antique fountain, whose three lions sat with open mouths, ceaselessly pouring forth torrents of water into the cisterns below, the sound being refreshing and cool in the heat of the mid-day sun.

A sharp tug at the rope that hung by the side of the gates produced a loud peal within, and brought a porter to the square iron grating, through which it was the custom to demand the business of those who came to the institution.

On hearing that they wished to see the

principal the gates were unlocked, and Rosa and Salvator were conducted through a covered passage to a second door, over which stood a statue of St. Benedict. Passing on, they were shown into a room with a stone floor, and containing no furniture except a table, a few plain chairs, and a large map of Italy, hung up at one end. The only view from the window was the high wall before mentioned.

Poor Salvator could scarcely refrain from shuddering at the appearance of everything around. His worst fears had not pictured anything so melancholy. At last, when they had waited a long time, and no one appeared, he ventured to say, "Father, *must* I stay here?"

"Yes," was the unsympathizing reply, "if only you have the good fortune to be received; in which case you ought to be thankful for being permitted to remain. It will be the making of you in after life, in all probability."

There was a ray of hope in the beginning of his father's sentence. He might *possibly* be rejected.

The principal entered at last. A tall dignified-looking man of middle age. Father Antonio had paved the way for their reception, and he looked at Salvator with interest. His eye, well accustomed to scan countenances, saw in the one before him indications of no ordinary character. He put a few questions to him as to what he had learned with Father Antonio; but it was the broad wide brow, the clear flashing eye, and the firm resolved mouth that, rather than his answers, decided the fate of their owner. There happened to be a vacancy, and turning to Rosa, the principal told him his son should be received then and there into the college, to be educated free of all charges, according to the rules for poor students so admitted. "And I take him," he added, "in the hope that he will do honour to the institution of which he now becomes a pupil."

Rosa expressed his grateful thanks and his desire that his son should prove himself worthy of having been selected. He then embraced Salvator, who stood as one petrified to the floor, in the greatness of his dismay at this rapid conclusion of affairs. He neither spoke nor returned his father's parting salutation, who, bowing low to the principal, left the place; and Salvator was conducted into the interior of the building to the scholars, his future companions.

Rosa's feelings at the result of his visit to the college were very different to his son's. He walked away with the buoyant step of a man lightened of a great burden. Salvator was safe now. No more running away, no more idle hours spent in sketching and fostering the talent which, though he saw it was there, he was resolved the lad should not be foolish enough to cultivate. There would be no further expense with him either, and this was no small relief to one whose means of

support were diminishing year by year. As he drew near home he saw his wife and daughters in front of the house, watching for his return. The absence of Salvator proclaimed the fact of his admission before they could be told it in words. There was a mixture of pleasure and sorrow in their feelings, but the former predominated, believing, as they did, that he was most fortunate.

"The boy is provided for," said Rosa, as he sat down to the evening meal with his family. "Thank Heaven, there is an end to his ever becoming an artist!"

"Thank Heaven, that I have so far been able to fulfil my vow!" said his wife. "The boy is no common one, and I feel sure will surprise us all in time."

Those were days of intense superstition, when signs and wonders were sure to mark any particular family event. They had been abundant at Salvator's birth, for Guilia Rosa

had been ever on the look out for them at that time, nor was she less watchful now.

That night, soon after every one was in bed, there was a rumble of an earthquake, which slightly shook the houses in and round about Naples. Vesuvius, too, was unusually active, sending forth flame and smoke beyond its ordinary habit. Guilio Rosa took the events as prognostics of the future greatness of her son, and she arose and spent the rest of the night before the shrine of "Our Lady," thanking her for her aid, and asking for protection for her boy in his new abode.





CHAPTER III.

QUR young hero did not at first find college life any pleasanter than he had anticipated. The confinement of it was hateful to him. One long dreary walk early in the day, in the suburbs of the town, was all that the students were allowed of exercise and sunshine, except on Sundays, when the rule was relaxed, and they were permitted to go on the public promenade. As for his studies, however, he found them far more interesting when pursued with others than alone as formerly. He had good abilities, though he had used them so little hitherto, but now he had the stimulus of emulation, and it worked

wonders. By degrees, as he became familiar with the dead languages, he began to read classical poetry with avidity. His mind opened to their beauties, and he could verify the truth of Francanzani's words at Sorrento, that the day would come when he would see that poetry and painting were sister arts.

His pencil had not lain idle since he came to college. On the contrary, it had drawn him into innumerable scrapes. Having no landscapes to sketch, and no drawing materials to make use of except his pencil or pen and ink, he employed his talents in caricaturing both masters and students. The walls of his study, the margins of his own books and of books not his own, all bore witness to the cleverness of his powers in this line. In vain he was reproved and threatened. He continued to produce and reproduce every remarkable face or feature around him, not even sparing the dignified principal himself. When, however, his mind

began to be filled with classical ideas, his pencil employed itself no longer in caricaturing his neighbours, but in sketching groups and subjects prompted by his reading. Thus passed three or four years, during which time his progress in classical studies was very considerable, and quite satisfied his superiors.

He saw but little of his relations during this period, for by the rules of the college the students on the foundation were not allowed to go home except in case of the severe illness of a parent. But their friends were permitted to visit them on certain days. On one of these occasions he was summoned into the reception room, where he expected to find some of his own family. Great then was his astonishment when he found his old Sorrento friend, Francanzani, standing before him! The warmth of their greeting showed that time had not diminished their former interest in each other.

"Why, Salvator," exclaimed the artist, "how you are grown and altered. I should scarcely

have known you ! So, here you are at college, after all ? Are you becoming reconciled to the thought of being a cardinal, and driving in a red silk gown in a grand carriage drawn by two thorough-bred black steeds, and living in a palace with your chaplains and servants bowing and scraping to you, and currying your favour, in case fortune should make you pope some day ? ”

Salvator smiled and shook his head.

“ You mean,” said he, “ to ask if I am more reconciled to the prospect of becoming a priest. Alas ! no ; I am simply submitting to my fate because I cannot help myself ; I long more than ever to become an artist. But tell me, Francanzani, how did you know where to find me ? and where have you been all these years ? ”

“ I will answer your last question first,” he replied. “ I have been going about in the summer taking sketches, which I filled up and tried to sell in the winter. Rome has

been my head-quarters. This year I decided to come and try my luck in Naples. As soon as I arrived I hunted up your father, who had not forgotten me, I found, and who received me cordially; all the more so, perhaps, because his son being stowed safely away here, he knew I could do him no harm by encouraging his artistic propensities. I had an invitation to go and see them whenever I pleased; and, I assure you, I have not been slow to accept it, for all is beauty up there. The house, the garden, the view, and—last, not least—your sisters, are beautiful. Maria is perfect; quite a study for a painter, and she is sitting to me for her likeness. I wanted a real lovely face for a Madonna, and hers is just the thing. She sits to me most days, so I am getting on quickly.”

He *was* getting on quickly, for the next time he went to see Salvator, a few weeks later, it was to tell him that he had won Maria for his wife!

Salvator was delighted, but surprised. "Is it possible," he asked, "that my father has consented to her marrying an *artist* !"

"He has indeed," said Francanzani. "At first he did not like it, and I was afraid he would refuse his consent ; but Maria contrived to talk him over, and what helped not a little was the sale of my Madonna, which fetched a good price. This gave me an opportunity of assuring your father that Maria's face would bring us a little fortune in itself, for I meant to paint her in every character I could think of. Your mother, at all events, believed me, good soul, and she spoke to Signor Rosa and got him to consent, and so we shall be married before long, when I can arrange matters. Unfortunately, we shall be rather poor ; but that is the fate of artists, and Maria says she shall not mind."

"It will not be new to her to be poor," said Salvator, who remembered nothing but a

system of pinching to make ends meet ever since he was a child.

"I am afraid you must not come to our marriage," said Francanzani.

"No, it would be against rules," said Salvator. "I am on the foundation, and the scholars never go home."

"Well, college days can't last for ever, you know; and, when they are over, you will come and see Maria and me in the snug little nest we mean to have. In the mean time work hard and get into high favour with the heads of the college; it will stand you in good stead in the end."

It was about a year after this time that a new epoch arrived in Salvator's college career, which led to very unexpected circumstances.

It was the custom of the Italian schools, at the period of which we are writing, to make students devote several years to classical learning, and then to lay it entirely aside in order to commence a series of dry philosophy

and logic, considered highly essential, and was consequently firmly insisted upon by those in authority.

The time had arrived for Salvator to lay aside his classics, which he did with regret; but when he entered on the study of philosophy, he found it utterly distasteful, and was convinced he should never be able to do anything with it. At length, with an audacity that amazed his teachers, he positively refused to go on studying, declaring it was useless for him to try to master the subjects. All argument, persecution, and threats failed, so the principal was informed of the state of affairs.

He sent for Salvator, and asked why he refused to follow the course of learning prescribed by the rules of the institution?

He replied respectfully, but firmly, that it would be but waste of the long period that would be devoted to it, for his mind was not constituted for either logic or philosophy.

“But, it is absolutely essential that you

should give a certain period of your university life to it," said the principal. "You cannot become an ecclesiastic unless you do so. The rules of the college must be adhered to in your case as well as in others."

"And if I fail utterly in the end," asked Salvator, "what will be the result?"

"Of course you will be rejected, and sent away from college."

"Then, signor, that may as well come to pass sooner as later," was the rather provoking reply, "and time will be saved, for I might turn at once to another profession."

The principal grew angry. He insisted on submission. Salvator persisted that he had no memory or powers of mind to grapple with the course of study laid before him. Quite a battle of words ensued; Salvator did not yield in the least. Probably he felt that to be firm in his refusal to obey, was to give him a last chance of escape from the destiny to which he had never become reconciled.

His superior was not a man to be trifled with. He was indignant at a poor student, who was being educated gratis, daring to oppose both his will and the time-honoured rules of the school. He consulted his colleagues, who pronounced it to be a case of insubordination highly dangerous in such a community unless punished by instant expulsion.

Salvator was summoned again, and in the presence of the principal and masters had the choice given him of either promising to apply himself to the necessary studies for the usual period (all that time never opening a classical book), or leaving the college that very day in disgrace. He at once choose the latter course ; and, in consequence, the gates of the Collegio Somasca closed upon him that afternoon. He walked away with mixed feelings of pleasure and regret. Pleasure, because liberty was once more his, at least, for the present ; regret, that his parents should have the sorrow of

finding that he had been expelled. He scarcely knew how he should face them and tell the tale. He was half tempted not to go home at all, but better thoughts prevailed, and he resolved to throw himself on his father's mercy, ask his forgiveness, and once more try to get his sanction to become an artist; assuring him he would soon cease to be any burden to them. He felt acutely on this last point, for he knew that his parents' resources were now at the lowest ebb. His sister being married to Francanzani was the only bright spot in the family history. He knew his brother-in-law would help him as to instruction, and he was rising in his profession, though still struggling for a livelihood with so much difficulty as to verify his father's oft repeated assertions that an artist's life was but a constant struggle.

His heart beat rapidly as he neared home, and saw his sister Carlina sitting knitting in the porch. She formed a pretty picture, with

her hair drawn off her face, according to the fashion of that day, and fastened at the back of the head with a wide-spreading silver comb ornamented with a row of silver balls along its top. She was singing a merry little Italian song, and her voice, clear and loud, reached her brother's ear some time before he came near enough to be recognized.

Her mother was engaged in some domestic occupation in the house that afternoon. Signor Rosa was busy finishing a picture, which must be disposed of as quickly as possible, for bills were staring him in the face which were of long standing. Times were worse than ever for the sale of paintings, and he had for some time been seriously thinking that he should be compelled to sell his house and garden on the hill and take small rooms in Naples. The little property had been in his family for several generations, so the thoughts of parting with it was a great trial, and not calculated to sweeten a temper naturally irri-

table. His great comfort was that his son was well off their hands, and he often spoke of this with satisfaction.

Such was the state of affairs at home on the day when Salvator arrived. He was first seen by Carlina, who had noticed a youth ascending the hill, but did not recognize her brother till he came near. Then suddenly she gave a cry of surprise.

"Mother, father, here is Salvator!" and ran into his arms.

Guilia Rosa threw down the handkerchief she was folding, and ran to the door to see if the astounding news were true. Yes! there indeed he stood, grown handsomer than ever, and very tall. She had not seen him for nearly a year, and she was right glad to welcome him, though bewildered as to the cause of his appearance, for she knew that it must be a direct infringement of the college rules.

Rosa laid down his brush and met his son

in the doorway. His first inquiry naturally was why was he there ?

Salvator did not hesitate to tell the plain truth at once, though regretfully, for he knew what sorrow he was about to cause.

"Father," he said, "I grieve to tell you that I have been dismissed from the college."

Rosa started. "Do you mean to say that you are not to return—that they have expelled you ?"

"Alas ! my father, it is so. I could not follow the studies they put before me lately, which were of a totally different kind to the former ones. I knew I had no power of learning what was expected of me, and that I should only cause disappointment to every one in the end, so I refused to attempt it, and therefore I was dismissed."

"Unhappy boy !" exclaimed Rosa ; "you know not what you have done ! You have destroyed your prospects in life, which were so good. You have come back to a home

where there is scarcely bread to eat, and to a house which I am expecting to be obliged to sell in order to pay my debts. The end of it must be that you will have to go forth and beg, and be grateful to anybody who will of their charity throw you a baicco."

At these words Guilia Rosa burst into tears, and cried aloud, whilst Carlina wrung her hands and gesticulated, but was in her secret heart glad to get her brother home under any circumstances. Salvator felt that they had indeed cause to be vexed with him. He attempted no justification of himself, only entreated forgiveness and forbearance.

"I am nearly a man now," he pleaded, "and I will soon provide for myself. Only give me food and clothing for a short time, and I promise that I will not require it long; I shall find a way of becoming independent."

"Not as an artist, I hope," said his father; "you are not going to take up that foolish notion again."

Salvator was silent. He felt it was not the moment to vex his father by telling him he meant to apply to his pencil with all his might.

But to Carlina that evening he confided his intentions and hopes, and she sympathized and told him to consult Francanzani, who was such a good, kind brother-in-law, and not so poor as *they* were, though he had to be very careful. He told her all about his college troubles, and the hateful logic and philosophy which had so scared him, and she comforted him by saying she was glad he had been sent away, and she was sure he would get on somehow; in short, she acted the part of a sister and confidante to perfection, which was no small relief to poor Salvator, who was feeling very much of a culprit with his parents, though they had received him on the whole with fewer reproaches than he had expected.

Francanzani and Maria welcomed him with

open arms in their Naples home. They had been married about a year and were extremely happy. Maria's face had been very lucrative to her husband, as he had jokingly declared it would prove. She had sat as the Virgin several times, and the pictures had sold well. They looked grave when they heard that Salvatore had been dismissed in disgrace, though his brother-in-law confessed that he believed he should have felt logic and philosophy as odious and impossible as he had done.

"And what are you going to do next?" asked Francanzani.

"I shall begin to study painting, and become an artist in real earnest," was the reply. "I know it will displease my father, but I have tried to follow out his and my mother's wishes for all these years, and now see how it has ended, because my inclinations are so against the life of an ecclesiastic. I may have been wrong in forcing the principal of the college to send me away; but I must have

disappointed everybody, sooner or later, so it was better to do it before the matter had gone further."

Francanzani laughed. "Well, Salvator," he said, "I am not sure but that you are right. You have a pretty strong will of your own, that is certain; and if you are bent on being a painter, why, you had better lose no more time. Not that I consider you have been losing time at college hitherto, for, as I said at Sorrento, classical studies will be a great gain to you. But now you must turn to your pencil and your brushes. You shall come and work in my studio every day, and I will try and help you on. It will be like the old Sorrento days back again."

This offer delighted Salvator, who expressed his thanks so warmly that his brother-in-law said, "You forget that I owe you more than I shall be able to pay back. Am I not indebted to you for my wife, who I should never have seen but for you?"

Francanzani was as good as his word. He supplied Salvator with all the drawing materials he required, and encouraged him to come to his house constantly. His sister Maria was very fond of him, and always gave him a hearty welcome.

It was well for the youth that he had such a refuge, for his father was growing more and more soured by misfortune. Finding that his son was resolved to follow his own inclinations, and also feeling that he knew not what to do with him, he ceased his opposition, though he gave him no encouragement, and constantly prophesied he would die a beggar. His mother would not reproach him, but she mourned secretly over the non-fulfilment of her vow, though comforted by Father Antonio's assurance that the Virgin would not be angry since it was no fault of hers.

The good father would not spare Salvator, however. He had heard all about his dismissal from the indignant principal, and did not

hesitate to give his former pupil a good scolding, which was meekly received because felt to be deserved. But perhaps the father was in his heart less angry than he seemed, for he said to one of his brother monks that he was not surprised at Salvator's kicking against logic, etc., as he had done. The fact was he felt himself born to be a painter ; and it was his (Father Antonio's) opinion that he would make his way in the world and become famous.

Francanzani was amazed at the rapid strides made by his pupil. He used to encourage him to go out and sketch the scenes that most took his fancy, and on his return he pointed out defects and showed him what was good in them. He would never allow a slovenly or careless stroke to remain, but as to making Salvator an artist by the usual course of study and plodding, he saw it was both impossible and not necessary, for nature itself was his real tutor and inspired him as no other teachers

could do. Even his father stared with amazement one day when Francanzani showed him a drawing of his son's, and pointed out how much genius there was in every stroke.

"You will be proud of him yet," he said.

"He has talent no doubt," said Rosa; "but of what use is that unless a man becomes the fashion."

The poor artist felt that he too had talent, but that it had not saved him from poverty!

Nearly two years were spent thus; Salvator living much more with his sister and brother-in-law than at home. From them he ever met the most generous kindness and encouragement.

"Bravo, Salvator!" said Francanzani to him one day, when he had just finished a really masterly drawing of the Bay of Naples in a storm. If you go on improving at this pace I shall grow jealous. The pupil is passing his master."

It was greatly to Francanzani's honour that

no tinge of jealousy crossed his mind, for he constantly prophesied to his wife that Salvator would become a far greater man than he should ever be, yet Francanzani was an artist of no ordinary talent, as after days proved.





CHAPTER IV.

THE time at length arrived when Salvator was to attain the long cherished desire of his heart, and go forth to ramble far and wide wherever fancy led him, to study nature in her many and varied aspects. His love of grandeur and wildness inclined him towards the Abruzzo mountains, although warned that they were dangerous on account of the brigands which infested them.

Maria in particular implored him not to go there, for she had a horror of the lawless tribe whose rapacity and cruelty were so well known, though probably much exaggerated.

Salvator only laughed at her fears, but

he promised to be careful and keep out of their way. So, bidding farewell to his family for an indefinite period, he started with a knapsack on his shoulder, a portfolio well filled with paper under his arm, and a heart bounding with pleasurable anticipation. Hardships he knew he should have to encounter, but he cared not for them. He was quite willing to spend nights out of doors, sleeping on the ground, and to endure the pinch of hunger sometimes for the sake of the glorious scenes he hoped to see and transmit to his canvas. Day after day, and week after week, he wandered from place to place, sometimes lingering, sometimes going forwards.

At length he found himself amongst the Abruzzo mountains, revelling in the rich stores of beauty they laid before him, though little thinking that some of the drawings he made as he wandered hither and thither were destined to render his name immortal. But his spirit had found its element in the midst

of that wild scenery, and his pencil became almost inspired under the mighty influences of nature's grandeur.

Absorbed as he was constantly in his occupation, it is not surprising that he quite forgot all his sister Maria's injunctions to avoid getting into the dangerous vicinity of the brigands, whose hiding-places were amongst the rocks and fastnesses of these mountains, from which they occasionally issued to be the terror and scourge of travellers and the adjoining towns.

Government offered large rewards to any one who could give information respecting their haunts which would lead to their capture. But the universal dread of them was too great for any one to venture to run the risk of being marked as an informer. The peasants and shepherds, who could have told most about them, regarded them as friends rather than foes, being in fact in their pay, for the brigands always behaved generously towards them, and took care they should look on them

as benefactors. Government had sent spies out from time to time into the mountains, but so few ever returned again, that it was considered a most dangerous service to enter upon, for it was well known that, if caught, a spy was put to death without mercy.

One day, as Salvator was rambling about as usual, he thought he smelt smoke, and soon saw it curling up at some distance. It was a welcome sight, for he supposed a peasant's hut was near, and he was hungry. He had for weeks lived on what he could procure from the poor mountaineers, who resided at such long distances from each other ; so that he was often put to great straits for food. He was hastily walking towards the spot from which the smoke proceeded, when he heard the trampling of heavy feet amongst some brushwood behind him, and, almost before he could look round, two men with guns on their shoulders laid hold of his arms and asked what he was doing there.

Salvator replied that he was an artist, travelling in search of subjects for drawing.

"You must come with us; you are our prisoner," was the reply. "You are on ground where none venture except spies. Away with us to our chief."

Salvator saw at once, by their dress and language, that they were brigands into whose hands he had fallen. Too late, he remembered the warnings he had received not to wander far into the recesses of these mountains, but at first his mind did not take in the greatness of his danger. The love of adventure was strong in him, and he thought he need not fear that they would think it worth while to harm one so poor as himself. He had often desired to look upon the picturesque scene a brigand's camp must be, and he was not sorry to have thus fallen on one. But he soon had cause to feel very differently.

The men walked on either side of him in silence till they came within sight of an open

space of ground, where was pitched a sort of rude tent. Many men were standing or lying about amongst the low brushwood. Every one was armed, and their countenances as Salvator approached, led by his guard, were menacing and angry. Two or three came forward and took him in charge, whilst the two who brought him passed on towards the tent, to inform their chief of the capture they had made.

In a minute or two a tall, fine-looking man came forth, who at the first glance Salvator knew must be the leader of the band. He looked like one born to command. His eye flashed with fire, whilst his firm compressed lips told of determination and resolve not easily shaken. The outline of his face, with its high aquiline nose, was essentially Roman, and there was that in his whole bearing which spoke of noble descent.

In those days the banditti of Italy was composed of men many of whom were from

the higher ranks of society. Men who had broken their country's laws in most instances, and had fled to escape punishment. Noblemen, gentlemen, and even priests, might be found amongst their ranks. They formed reckless but thoroughly organized bands, who were ready to receive with open arms all who came to be enrolled into their corps. But an oath had to be taken, and if ever this were broken, and any attempt made to escape, the delinquent was doomed to suffer instant death when captured, and captured he was sure to be.

The brigands were severe and inflexible in their laws, and thought little of taking away life as a punishment for the smallest act of insubordination. Indeed, without such severity, it would have been impossible to have governed a band formed in part of robbers, murderers, and men guilty in many instances of the most flagrant crimes. Others there were who the love of adventure and

liberty had tempted to join the wild wandering life led by these men of the mountains. But, from whatever cause they came, their lot was fixed from that time. Allegiance or death was the watchword. To the poor, as we have said, they were liberal and generous, supplying them with food and money when in need. They were consequently the only people who regarded them without terror.

The chief gave a searching look at Salvator from head to foot. It was a look the youth quailed under, though he had done no wrong.

"Young man," he said, "what brought you here ?"

"My desire to travel and to sketch. I am an artist," he answered.

"You speak as others have spoken before you," was the reply. "But no real artist has ever ventured hither. Spies have done so, under pretence of sketching, in hopes of the reward set on our heads by government. But not one of these have ever returned to tell

their tale. Nor shall you. You are a spy, and your fate is—Death.”

“I am no spy,” said Salvator indignantly. “I am truly an artist, and a very poor one.”

“Others have lied in the same way,” returned the chief. “Your words cannot save you. By the laws of our community, you must die.”

He blew a little silver whistle, and instantly a number of men came running up. They gathered round whilst their captain addressed them.

“This young man has been taken on the very borders of our encampment, comrades. Doubtless he was there with evil designs. His excuse is that he is an artist.”

“Look at my drawings,” said Salvator, hastily opening his portfolio. “They will speak for me, and show that I tell the truth.”

“Hundreds of such sketches would avail you nothing,” said the chief. “They may be done by another hand, and brought as a blind.

Comrades, what say you, is he to live or die?"

Deep-toned and decided came forth from every lip the words, "*Let him die.*"

It was a terrible knell to fall on the ear of the young man, so full of life, and hope, and talent. He looked round at the hard faces around him, and saw there was no mercy to be expected. With a bitter pang he thought of his mother, his sisters, his father, his friends, who would never know his fate. He thought of the future which but a few minutes ago had been so bright in its prospects. Oh, he felt it very hard thus to part with beautiful life in the outset!

At that moment another person appeared on the scene. From the door of the tent stepped forth a woman, still beautiful, though of middle age. Her dark eye glistened, and her lip quivered with excitement, as she sprang to the side of the chief, whose wife she was. Laying her hand upon his arm she exclaimed—

"Spare him ! spare him ! His is not the face of a spy. He is so young, let him go."

"By our rules he must be shot," replied the brigand, with an impatient gesture of the arm on which her hand rested. But she would not be put aside.

"Do not shed his blood," she entreated, "without giving him a chance for life. Let him bring forth his pencils and paper and draw before you. Judge then, from what he produces, whether his tale be true or false, and whether he is a true artist or not." Then, lowering her voice for only her husband to hear, she said, "By the memory of him we have lost, of the son who he so much resembles, have pity on him."

"By the Holy Virgin, you are right," exclaimed the brigand, whose heart was less hard than he was obliged to let it appear, and who was moved by the allusion to the son they had lately lost, who was their only child. "The thought is a good one, for justice and

severity must go hand in hand. Let us see, young man, what this vaunted skill of yours can produce. Time was when I was considered no mean judge of painting. We will give you the chance of proving whether you are come hither as a spy or an artist."

Salvator's countenance changed from deep despondency to joyful hope, as, untying his portfolio, he produced paper and a small easel, and asked what he should draw.

"Look around you," said the chief, "and sketch faithfully everything as you see it."

Salvator did look around, and his artistic eye at once took in the imposing features of the scene. The trees in the background, the tent, the chief in his picturesque dress, with his beautiful wife by his side. The brigands standing about their captain, himself a prisoner suing for mercy, all formed a scene which would have made him long to draw it even under very different circumstances, and now the doing so might save his life.

The novelty of the ordeal interested the men. They stood still as statues whilst Salvator proceeded to his work. So absorbed did he become in it, that he almost forgot the strange and critical circumstances under which he was placed. Face after face, figure after figure, grew on the paper under his hands. Each face was a perfect likeness; each figure showed the individuality of the man it was intended to produce. At length he had done sufficient to court inspection, and it was handed to the chief, who was for some moments apparently forgetful of everything in the earnest survey he was taking of that most masterly production.

His wife looked at it as he held it, and said softly, "He is no spy." Then it was passed from hand to hand, and murmurs of satisfaction went round as each man recognized himself and his comrades, and *felt* rather than understood the wondrous amount of talent that lay embodied in that sketch.

"He is an artist, he is no spy," was the murmur from one to another.

At length the chief spoke.

"Comrades, you see what he can do. For myself, I am satisfied that accident only has brought him here, and that he is not deserving of death. What say you?"

"Set him free!" was the universal sentence.

"Your talent has saved you," said the chief, "You are no longer our prisoner. We brigands have no desire to take life which is not seeking to endanger ours."

Salvator thanked him, but requested leave to put some more strokes to his drawing before he left.

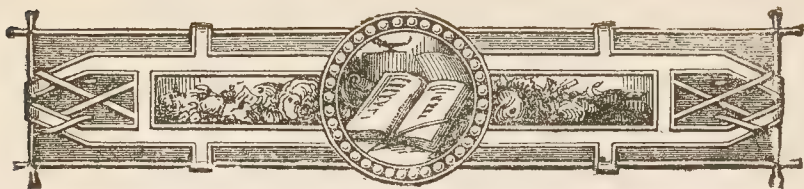
The wife whispered a few words into the ear of her husband, who spoke again.

"You say you are a wandering artist, going hither and thither amongst these mountains. If you care to stay with us, we will give you food and shelter, such as we provide for ourselves, for as long as you remain, or you may

at once depart. But, in either case, you must take a solemn oath that you will keep secret the circumstance of your having been with us. If ever that oath were broken, and you gave any information concerning us, you might from that time consider yourself a dead man. For we, too, have our spies as well as the government, and it is impossible for a traitor to escape our vengeance. No matter where he is or how he is circumstanced—his doom is certain.”

Salvator did not hesitate as to his choice. He desired nothing more than to remain for a time with these strange outlawed men. Their bold, reckless, wandering life exactly fell in with the taste of the young disciple of nature. He feared them no longer. He might trust their promised hospitality. He saw that their suspicion of him had turned into admiration. So he elected to remain amongst them for some time. He took the oath which bound him to secrecy, and kept it

faithfully as long as he lived, never divulging any particulars of what passed during the year he spent with them. We cannot, therefore, give our readers any information on the subject. One of Salvator's finest pictures, however, describes the brigand encampment. A tent in the background, before which stands a tall, commanding figure, dressed as a brigand chief. By his side, with her hand upon his arm, is a beautiful female, looking up earnestly into his face, apparently pleading for the life of the young man who stands before them in a dejected attitude awaiting his sentence. A number of men are grouped around, with guns on their shoulders. The eyes of them all are turned on the youth, and it is easy to see that there is little mercy to be expected from them, so grim and severe are their looks.



CHAPTER V.

WE must pass from the wild picturesque scene of a brigand encampment to a melancholy one on the hill behind Naples; for there, about a year and a half from the time we have been speaking of, lay Antonio Rosa on a dying bed.

Though far from being an old man, he was worn out with the perpetual struggle for a livelihood. A person of more placid temper and disposition would have taken his troubles differently, and submitted to what he could not help; but Rosa was in a constant state of ferment and excitement, which helped to aggravate a latent disease, and now he had succumbed to it, and had but a few hours to live.

He had greatly desired to see Salvator once more, for he loved him though he had often been harsh ; and he wished to commit to him the charge of his mother and sister. Nothing, however, had been heard of him since he left, for in those days epistolary correspondence was scarcely known amongst persons of the rank of Rosa's family ; opportunities for the transmission of letters being very rare.

Father Antonio stood by the sick man's bedside. He had been administering the consolations of religion, and was exhorting him to put aside all worldly cares, and think only of the great change that was so rapidly approaching.

"If I could but have seen my boy once more," said Rosa, "I should die in peace. I should like to bid him look after his mother. Carlina may marry, but Guilia will be dependent on him whilst she lives. Tell him from me, father, that I leave him my blessing and——"

The next word was not uttered, for the door opened, and in an instant Salvator knelt by his father's bedside and kissed his cheek. He had returned home unexpectedly, after his wanderings, and had heard from his mother and Carlina in the other room that his father was dying. They would fain have gone in first to prepare Rosa for the interview; but Salvator, always impetuous, could not wait, and entered without warning, though his doing so was dangerous, seeing that his father's life now literally hung upon a thread.

But Rosa, after the first few minutes of faintness and exhaustion from the surprise, was full of thankfulness to God for granting him this great favour, and was comforted by his son's affection in these his last moments. He died in his arms the following day.

And now began the real and serious struggle of Salvator's life. His mother and sister wholly dependent upon him, himself an

artist unknown and with his way to make, without money and without a home, it was no wonder that he felt downcast. It was impossible to think of continuing to live in the house that was their own. It was sold at once, and they had to move into some small lodgings in Naples; and Salvator could work no longer amidst the glorious scenes of nature, but in a narrow street inhabited by persons of a very humble description.

He had returned from the Abruzzo mountains with a profusion of sketches, which only required filling up with his brush to make them worthy each one of a high price, if he had had a name. And he knew this. Without any conceit (he had too much real talent to be tainted with that), he knew now what his drawings were worth. Francanzani also freely acknowledged that he had made such advances in his art that he had passed him.

“But of what use is it?” said that artist, somewhat bitterly; “of what use is it to have

talent and genius if you have not also the favour of fashion?"

"But I *will* make fashion bow down before me some day," replied Salvator. "Though I work, and labour, and starve for years, I will persevere, and the time shall come that I will crush poverty and obscurity under foot, and nobles shall seek my acquaintance, and shall sue to me to do them a drawing at my own price. Mark what I say, Francanzani, and see if my words do not come true."

His eye flashed and his whole frame seemed to expand as he spoke. It was as if the spirit of prophecy had inspired him at that moment. His words came true; but poor Francanzani was not to live to bear witness to their truth.

"Genius and ill-fortune will have a pitched battle in your case, I expect," said he; "and as you have plenty of spirit and resolve in your nature, it is likely genius may get the best of it in the end."

Very long, however, was that end in coming.

Salvator worked and worked. The family funds grew lower and lower. His mother fell into delicate health. Money was much needed, but his pictures did not sell, or if he found purchasers, they gave him far below their value. Months passed thus sadly and drearily. The love of his art was what alone enabled our hero to bear up against the weight of poverty and responsibility. But still he hoped on, and said, "I will conquer yet. It shall not be always thus."

At last the little family was reduced to such want, that he was driven to do what his pride revolted against. There were, in some of the smaller streets of Naples, shops where articles of all sorts were bought at prices far below their value. They somewhat resembled our pawnshops, but with the difference that whatever was taken was bought out and out, and would not be restored to the original owner. It was only in cases of dire necessity that persons ever visited these places in order to

sell anything; and it was with feelings of deep humiliation that Salvator sallied forth, under the cover of night, with a portfolio under his arm, being driven to the extremity of parting with a drawing or two for ready cash at any price.

He had noticed a shop kept by a Jew in the Strada della Carita. He was a grasping, cunning old man, who sold every imaginable article second-hand for at least five times the price he gave for it. Many a costly jewel and valuable piece of furniture had he obtained for a trifle, being always sure of his game, because he knew that only secret trouble or distress brought any one to his quarters. Once there, he could drive his own bargain. Salvator found Leoni the Jew sitting in his usual place in the shop on a tall stool. He wore a long dark cloak and a broad-brimmed yellow hat. A lamp hung over his head and lighted up his sallow face with its hooked nose and bright beadlike eyes, which were

ever restlessly looking out to see if any customers were hovering near, that he might give them a word of encouragement to enter.

Salvator passed the window once or twice before he could summon resolution to enter, so hateful to him was it to do so. Leoni's quick eye was observing him; he noted the portfolio under his arm, and instantly guessed the state of the case. Some starving artist. Perhaps a good bargain in that portfolio. As the spider watches the fly and hopes to catch him in his web, so did Leoni take his measures to secure the young man who was hovering about. Once in his meshes, there would be no escape.

"Good evening, signor; good evening. Can I sell you some little matter to-night? I have something of all sorts. Walk in, worthy sir, walk in, and let me show you what you are in search of. You can scarcely name the article that Leoni will not produce, and he will let you have it for a trifle, a mere trifle."



SALVATOR AND THE JEW DEALER.

"I am not come to buy," said Salvator, "but to sell, if you are inclined to buy; "and he began to untie his portfolio. He withdrew a little further into the shop as he spoke, casting rather a quick, nervous glance towards the street, as if afraid lest passers-by should notice what he was doing. And this convinced Leoni that he had him in his power.

"I care not much to buy pictures," he said, "unless they are framed. There is little sale for them; but I will just look at them."

Salvator tenderly brought forth one or two of the paintings at which he had laboured with loving care. The old man was something of a judge. The many years he had spent in buying and selling had given him a pretty keen insight into what was money's worth; it had taught him also the cleverest and most cunning ways of depreciating what he knew to be valuable, in order to get it cheap.

He held out his hand for the pictures.

“Ha !” he exclaimed, after an attentive survey ; “these are pretty to look at, but they not the sort to sell well. I’m afraid I can’t take them. What price do you ask ?”

Salvator named a very modest sum, which he knew to be far below their value. The Jew laughed and handed them back to him, saying—

“I could not give you half ; no, not the quarter price ; they are not worth it.”

Salvator’s wounded pride made him at once put back his apparently despised drawings in the portfolio ; yet, whilst tying the strings, he remembered the state of affairs at home, where there was actually not bread to eat, nor money to purchase certain drawing materials he needed urgently.

Leoni turned away as if he considered he had done with him, and began to rub up some old silver ornaments ; all the time, however, glancing at his visitor from the corner of his eye, and feeling pretty certain that he

wanted money too much not to come to the proffered terms.

Salvator put the portfolio under his arm, and made for the door. Then, just as Leoni expected, before passing out, he said—

“What is the highest price you will give for them?”

The Jew named a paltry sum. “I will give you so much, and no more,” he said; “no, not one paul more, and I shall be a loser by them, no doubt. They will lie by and get dirty. People will pass and not buy; but I will run the risk, if you want money badly. Do as you please.”

Salvator stepped back into the shop. He spoke not a word; but, again untying the strings of the portfolio, he once more took out the drawings, and put them into the old man's hands, who, opening an old-fashioned sort of bureau, took from it the sum agreed upon, and counted it into Salvator's hand.

The next moment the poor young artist was

striding up the street at a furious pace. "My father was right," he muttered, "when he used to declare I should come to starve if I followed this profession ; for starving I am, but I don't mind that so much as having to sell my drawings for almost nothing to that horrid old Jew, who considers them mere daubs. He will probably sell them to a revenditore, who buys up trash to sell again. Most probably my Abruzzo sketches are destined to adorn some restaurant or way-side inn."

He was rushing along so recklessly that he accidentally upset a little beggar child who had stepped before him in order to beg. He picked her up, and thrust a coin into her hand of higher value than she was accustomed to receive, and which well recompensed her for her tumble.

"Would that I could afford to fling away every farthing of the odious Jew's money," said he, "and get back my drawings again. But I must bide my time, I will not despair ;

my day will come. The harder the hill is to climb, the greater the reward when one gets to the top." Perhaps at that moment Salvator had a presentiment that the time would come, as in truth it *did* come, that the drawings he had just parted with would sell for hundreds of pounds each !

He returned to his studio, and sat for some time in deep dejection with his head resting on his arms. The fate of his cherished drawings had cut him to the heart.

Suddenly he started up. "Why am I so wretched?" he said to himself. "Have I not within me the power of producing any number of such drawings as those I have parted with? Have I not a long life before me probably? 'Hope on, hope ever,' shall be my motto."

So saying, he set himself to plan a new drawing, his old courageous hopeful spirit revived, and he pondered over a subject.

At length he decided on that of "Hagar in the desert." It suited his state of mind to

imagine the outcast mother wandering through a pathless desert, under a burning sky, all hope extinguished, till at length she laid her child under a shrub, and turned away that she might not see him die. This was the moment of her touching history that he seized upon to depict. He felt at home amongst nature's scenes, and could boldly conceive the idea of the desolate, dreary region of Beersheba.

Relieved for a time from immediate want, he forgot poverty and trouble, and sat for many hours together entirely absorbed in his "Hagar." Week after week passed as it grew under his hand, till one day Francanzani coming in, exclaimed—

"Why, Salvator, the woman moves and breathes as one looks at her, and as for the sky it makes me feel hot only to be near it. That picture ought to make your fortune, man !"

Francanzani and his wife were themselves experiencing the pinch of poverty at this

time. Salvator saw much less of them than formerly, but when they did meet it was always with the same brotherly feelings as before.

At length the picture was finished, and Salvator had great hopes that it would be purchased by one of the principal shops, where only the best pictures were displayed, and where he thought it would be appreciated. Thither he took it, but was told that it only answered their purpose to purchase the paintings of artists whose names were known, or who belonged to the school of some great master; that however good as to execution his might be, it would not command a purchase, as his name was unknown.

He took it to another and another. The same answer was given him by all. Then he asked if it could stand in their window, but was told they did not do business in that way. So Salvator had to return with his picture in his arms, dispirited and dejected.

As he passed by the magnificent church of the "Gesù," he saw a handsome carriage standing at the great doors, and a crowd of people collected around it, evidently waiting in expectation of seeing some one of importance. Salvator had the curiosity to inquire who it was.

"Do you not know," replied the young man of whom he asked the question, "that the great artist Lanfranco is in Naples? He is come from Rome, on purpose to paint the ceiling of the church, by invitation of the Jesuit fathers.

"Lanfranco!" exclaimed Salvator. "I must see him!"

Lanfranco was at this time one of Italy's greatest artists, and had a name which made him an object of interest wherever he went. He was known to be kind in lending a helping hand to young aspirants in his own profession, and consequently there were several of them waiting with notes of introduction to

him from some great person, requesting him to condescend just to look at their drawings and give a word of encouragement or advice. These were chiefly inside the church, into which Salvator pressed his way. Those who had letters meant to present them to him as he left; and those who had not, hoped for a bow, or, perchance, for a word of courtesy from the distinguished visitor, or for a consent to look at their drawings, for Lanfranco not unseldom would take them home with him when offered, examine them in the privacy of his own rooms, and write a few words of comment on the back, and then leave them to be given, when called for, to the owner who mentioned his name as the one written on the drawing.

Salvator had heard of this benevolent custom of the great painter; but he did not know before that he had actually arrived in Naples.

Lanfranco was seated on a high platform,

adding a few last touches to his day's work. He was in no haste to descend, but he did so at length, and then the young men came forward respectively and presented their notes and drawings, which were courteously received, and the latter taken by his attendants.

Salvator's heart beat high. Here was a true artist ; one who would recognize real talent where it existed. If only he would look at his "Hagar," and pass his opinion upon it ! Dare he ask him to take it home ?

Salvator was naturally a retiring young man. He shrank from stepping up to Lanfranco, though longing to do so. Others less sensitive went before him as he was hesitating. Lanfranco glanced at him and at the drawing he carried ; but as Salvator did not offer it, he passed on to the door of the church, and thence to his carriage, amidst the admiring looks of the crowd.

The opportunity was lost ; and the next day business of an urgent nature obliged

Lanfranco to return to Rome for two or three weeks.

Salvator made one or two other attempts to dispose of his "Hagar," but in vain. Money was again painfully needed. They had lately lived on credit, which was refused to be longer continued. There was no alternative but to visit Leoni again !

A second time, therefore, our poor hero set forth, sick at heart, and made his way to the old Jew's shop.

He found him seated on the same stool as before, in the same yellow hat. He looked as if he had never stirred from the spot since they had parted.

"Good evening, signor ; good evening. You have come to buy, I hope ? What will it please you for me to show you ?"

Salvator answered by taking out his "Hagar" and showing it to him.

"It is a pretty picture, very pretty," said the old man ; "but subjects out of the Bible

are not much cared for. However, I will oblige you ; I will take it off your hands if you are willing to accept a moderate sum for it."

Salvator named his price, a very small one, for he knew it was no use to ask more.

"I cannot afford to give so much," said Leoni. "I sold your others for less than I gave. I cannot be out of pocket again."

"Then give it me back," said Salvator ; "I will take no less for it. I would rather destroy it than let you have it for one paul less. You know well that it is worth far more, and that you try to grind me down because you think I am needy."

He held out his hand for it. The avaricious old Jew saw he was in earnest ; but he had no intention of letting it go. He had sold his former drawings for three times as much as he had given for them, and the glance he had taken of "Hagar" showed him he might do still better in this case.

"Softly, softly, good sir," he said ; "old

Leoni did not mean to make you so angry. He will give you what you ask for this time, as you are not a new customer."

He counted out the money to Salvator, whose disgust at the avaricious old man increased every instant, and he longed to be quit of his presence.

He left the shop, little expecting ever to see or hear of his "Hagar" more.

As for Leoni, he examined his purchase by daylight with great satisfaction, and put it in a conspicuous place in his window.

Now it so happened that Lanfranco's apartments were situated in an adjoining street to the one in which Leoni lived, and twice every day his carriage passed his shop on its way to the "Gesù." He was always noted for his smart liveries and almost princely equipage, so that it was an object of curiosity to Leoni as well as to others when he first arrived; but after a time, as it passed so constantly, it ceased to arouse any interest in him. But, to

his great surprise, the said equipage one afternoon, instead of going by as usual, actually pulled up at his door, and one of the grand liveried footmen, after speaking for a moment with his master inside the carriage, entered the shop.

Leoni was so startled at the apparition of gold lace and fringe that stood before him, that he was almost deprived of the power of speech, and could do nothing but cringe and keep bowing low before it.

"My master desires to see a particular picture he has noticed in your window," said the man, "the one in the centre."

"It is the 'Hagar,'" said Leoni, recovering his self-possession. He took it out, and carrying it to the carriage window, handed it in to Lanfranco, who carefully examined it, whilst Leoni kept up a constant succession of bows and scrapings to him and to the footman, who stood by awaiting his master's next bidding.

"Who did this drawing? What is the

name of the artist?" asked Lanfranco, at length.

"Noble sir, I cannot tell," was the reply.

"How did it come into your possession?"

"Noble sir, it was sold me by a young man, whose name I know not, though he has been to my shop once or twice to sell his drawings."

"Have you any other drawings of his?"

"They are sold, noble sir."

"I will buy this one; name your price."

The cunning Leoni had been turning this subject over in his mind ever since he came to the carriage door, notwithstanding the bowing manœuvres he had been going through. He suspected he might get a windfall through the merits of this picture, since so great an artist as Lanfranco condescended to ask to see it. Yet he was afraid to name too high a sum, lest he should overreach himself. So he contented his avarice by mentioning about five times the sum he had given Salvator, which was so instantly given him that he deeply

regretted he had not mentioned double the amount.

"Should the young man come to you again, give him this card, and bid him call on me," said Lanfranco.

"Noble sir, I will do so," said the Jew, making a fresh series of low bows as the handsome, ponderous carriage, with its sleek horses and liveried footmen, drove off. Then he turned into his shop, and put his newly acquired gains into his bureau, muttering to himself, "Pretty well for one day's work, but it might have been better if I had known what I was about."

The circumstance of Lanfranco's carriage having stopped at the Jew's door spread like lightning amongst all the artists and picture dealers. It was known that he had bought and carried off a picture. *Whose* could it be? No one who had made any way in the profession would think of selling one of their productions to a shop of this kind. It must

be some unknown artist who was very poor, but whose picture had attracted Lanfranco, and who would perhaps be brought forward by him. Curiosity and jealousy were all alive on the subject. Salvator knew nothing of what had occurred. He mixed very little with the artist world, for he did not care to have it known that he was reduced to selling his pictures to such a shop as Leoni's, which would be the case if he encouraged other painters to visit his studio.

When Lanfranco returned home he carefully searched all over the picture of "Hagar" to see if he could find the name of the painter, but in vain.

"It is strange," he said to his friend Falconi, who was with him, "that he who could produce such a work of art as this should have omitted to place his name on it. It is full of genius and originality."

"Look here," said Falconi, who was himself an artist of considerable ability, "there are

some letters in this corner amongst the shading of the shrub under which the child is laid, but they are so small, it will require a magnifying glass to make them out."

"*Salvator*" was at length spelt. Lanfranco requested Falconi, who lived in Naples, to try and find the artist, and ask him to come to him.

It was not an easy task in that vast city to discover the whereabouts of one obscure man whose Christian name was the only guide. But an accidental circumstance came to his aid in the beginning of his search. After going to several places and persons to inquire if the name were known, and being always answered in the negative, he thought he would seek the shop of the old Jew where the picture was bought; as although he had said he did not know of whom he purchased it, he might possibly be able to extract some information about him which would lead to his discovery.

It happened that *Salvator* strolled down the

street of La Carita that same day, an unmistakable desire having seized him to look again on the face of his "Hagar," which he knew had been given the best place in the window. When he arrived he found it gone! He longed to know whether it was sold, or merely not put on view that day. His heart yearned after this picture of his creation, as a parent yearns after a lost child.

After a moment's hesitation he entered the shop. Leoni gave him a much more cordial greeting than on former occasions. He had hopes of making considerable gain out of his drawings, now that Lanfranco's purchase of "Hagar" was likely to make him more known. He thought with satisfaction of the neat sum he had already pocketed by them; but saw that it would be dangerous to his interests to let him know who had become the possessor of his picture.

"Have you brought another drawing for me?" he inquired of Salvator.

"No," replied the other; "I have merely looked in to ask if you had sold my picture of Hagar, as I see it is no longer in the window."

"Well, yes, I sold it for a small sum yesterday."

"Will you tell me to what sort of customer you sold it?"

"How can I tell you what sort he may be? I don't trouble myself as to who or what my purchasers may be, not I. All I do is, I name my price and they give me the money, and I hand them the article, and then we have done with each other."

"I only asked you because I felt anxious the picture should get into good hands," replied Salvator. "When I painted that 'Hagar' I hoped for a very different fate for it than to bring it here, and I am sorry to lose all sight of it."

He turned to go away, and saw a gentleman standing just inside the doorway, who stepped forward, and, taking no notice of the ob-

sequious Jew, who bowed, as he hoped, to a customer, he said to Salvator—

“Pardon me for speaking to you, but I heard you mention a painting as I entered, the subject of which you said was ‘Hagar.’ I am in search of the artist who painted a picture which was bought from this shop yesterday, the subject being ‘Hagar in the desert.’ May I ask if your name is Salvator? and whether that picture was done by yourself?”

“My name is Salvator, and I am the artist of ‘Hagar in the desert.’”

“I rejoice to have found you,” said Falconi (for it was he), “and I congratulate you on the success of your picture, which has been purchased by no less a critic than Lanfranco. He was struck by it as he passed, and carried it home with him. We found the name Salvator in the corner, and I was deputed to try and find you out, and request you to come to see Lanfranco.”

Salvator could scarcely believe that he heard aright. That his "Hagar" was actually in the possession of the great Lanfranco seemed too good to be true. His most earnest desire had been that it should be seen by a really competent judge.

Those who are possessed of a high order of genius have generally a consciousness of the fact, wholly and entirely remote from conceit or vanity. No failure and no neglect can extinguish the innate perception that they have the gift. So it was with Salvator. From the first he had been aware of his own merits, and the fact that he remained unknown and unappreciated had not discouraged or weakened his confidence in his powers. This discrimination as to his "Hagar" by one of the first masters of the day did not surprise him, therefore, though it raised his spirits, and gave him a secret hope that his star might be beginning to rise above the horizon.

Falconi told him to come to Lanfranco

that evening, and bring with him any sketches or finished drawings he might have by him.

It was with elastic steps that Salvator trod the streets of Naples a few hours later, taking with him many of his Abruzzo sketches. He was ushered at once into the presence of Lanfranco, who received him cordially and with great interest. The first thing that met his eye was his own "Hagar" standing on a table.

"And so, young man," said Lanfranco, when a few preliminary words had passed, "so *you* are the artist who produced this picture, which I consider full of fine touches and admirable talent? It ought not to have found its way to the place where I saw it. I fear you got but poorly paid for it, for the old Jew only asked me a sum entirely out of proportion to its value."

"He gave me scarcely anything," said Salvator; "but I was compelled to part with it for what he named—I had no choice."

"I see, I see," said Lanfranco quickly, with

feelings of deep pity for the young artist, who he knew must have indeed been at an extremity before he could have parted with such a production to such a purchaser. His delicacy instantly suggested a method of relieving him pecuniarily without wounding his feelings.

“I consider myself in your debt for the picture,” he said. “The small sum I paid the ignorant Jew was a mere trifle compared to its value, and I must hand the difference over to you before I can consider myself its lawful possessor.” So saying, he took out a purse and handed a sum to Salvator which astounded him, and which he hesitated to take. But Lanfranco settled it in an instant by saying, “I have given you no more than it is worth, and so I must beg you will either receive your due or take back your picture.” He then asked to see what he had in his portfolio, and examined his Abruzzo drawings with great interest.

"Young man," he said, "you have a great career before you. Nature has given you large gifts. Persevere! Let no discouragement daunt you! My advice to you is not to follow any particular school, but let Nature continue to be your instructor. I shall be very glad to give you any hints or advice from time to time whilst I am in Naples."

He was as good as his word. He often gave Salvator valuable advice: pointed out defects, and praised and encouraged as long as he was in Naples. When he left he carried "Hagar" away with him, and placed it in his own picture gallery in a most honourable place, and used to point it out to his friends as the work of one who would probably some day be well known to the world.

But cheering and useful as had Lanfranco's notice of Salvator been, it brought on him much jealousy from other young artists. Nor did he derive the advantage from it that might have been expected, though it enabled

him to demand a higher price for his drawings from better shops. He looked, however, for great things from Lanfranco's patronage in Rome, whither that artist had advised him to go as soon as he could do so. Great then was his grief and disappointment when he heard of his death not long after. He felt that in him he had lost one who would have been a steady friend and warm patron. No wonder that he exclaimed—

“All things seem against me!”





CHAPTER VI.

“**I** AM free now to go to Rome,” exclaimed Salvator one day, a year or two after the time of which we have been speaking, “and to Rome I will go. I shall surely make my way there. Only to see its ruins and tread on the classic ground will be happiness in itself.”

His mother and sister had gone to reside with an uncle, an arrangement which set Salvator at liberty to go whither he would. He had been a good son and brother, and would not leave Naples whilst they needed him ; but he had long yearned secretly to visit Rome, and now the time had come for the accomplishment of his wishes.

He arrived in Rome footsore and weary, for both economy and choice had decided him to walk all the distance from Naples. It was with a sense of utter loneliness he passed through the crowded streets, gazing with some amazement at the magnificent equipages of the cardinals and nobles.

He procured humble lodgings near the forum, and day after day wandered about, taking sketches of the mouldering, picturesque ruins, and enjoying the new and artistic ideas suggested by the classic ground he was treading, which formed subjects for many of his after pictures. But he often said, in later days, that his loneliness during this his first visit to Rome was almost unbearable.

One of his favourite rambles was by the side of the unwholesome Tiber, and here he lingered long enough to become a victim to the Roman fever which still prevails so much in the city, and was in those days a perfect curse to the inhabitants. His landlord, finding

he was in for it, had him removed to an hospital, where he lay for several weeks. He was well nursed, but no one knew anything about him or whence he came. He kept a portfolio under his pillow, which he carefully guarded.

"Do you know anything of our patient's history?" asked the physician, Dr. Baldivini, one day of the nun who was nursing him.

"Nothing," was the reply, "except that he was brought here by a man in whose house he had been lodging, and who said he was an artist, and that he insisted on bringing his portfolio with him. He was more dead than alive when they brought him in, but he clung so to the portfolio that we let it remain. In his delirium he talks so often about brigands and their ways, that one would almost suspect he had been one. At other times he fancies he is sketching, and raves about scenery, and rocks, and trees, just as if he really was looking at them."

A few days later Dr. Baldivini, finding he was recovering and would soon be able to be discharged, asked him where he was going when he left Rome.

"Back to Naples," he replied. "That is my native place. I came to Rome to see it, and hoping to make my way here as an artist; but, instead of that, I have lost both health and spirits. I shall leave it, but not for ever. I may return some day, perhaps, under different circumstances than I am in at present."

"An artist's profession is an arduous and a slow one," said the kind-hearted doctor. "May I see what is in your portfolio?"

His eye glanced rapidly over some of its contents; but his forte lay in judging of diseases, and not drawings. He had asked to see them that he might have an opportunity of slipping a little packet of money into the portfolio, fearing that the young man would be in real want when he left the hospital. He saw that he was a gentleman, and therefore

took this method of trying to be of use to him without wounding his feelings. Good, kind Dr. Baldivini! Many a similar act of kindness had he shown to patients under his care.

So Salvator started on his homeward journey, weak and weary, feeling that he had lost rather than gained ground by his visit to Rome.

"It has been less kind to me even than my native city," he said; "but I will not give in. I will take for my motto 'Nil desperandum.' Fortune is at present making me her ball, and tossing me to and fro without mercy. She will tire of her sport in time, and perhaps do me a good turn or two, and that is all I require. The rest will lie in my own power!"

It was not long after Salvator's return to Naples that his mother, Guilia Rosa, died. This event was followed by the marriage of his sister, Carlina, and her departure from Naples with her husband to another part of

the country. Salvator now applied himself to his art with greater assiduity than ever. Day after day found him early and late at his easel. He had no longer any difficulty in selling his productions for prices that kept him in comfort and allowed him to take larger and better rooms. He was able also to help his brother-in-law, Francanzani, and his wife, who were extremely poor. But the fame he thirsted after seemed still far from him.

He had formed a friendship, when at college, with a young man named Girolamo Mecuri. He had always been an admirer of Salvator when they were students together, and had appreciated his talents. Girolamo became a priest, and was as poor as Salvator himself for some time. The friendship between the young men continued firm, and Girolamo had been Salvator's only confidante when he was compelled to sell his pictures to the Jew. He had rejoiced when Lanfranco's notice of his "Hagar" and of himself seemed likely to bring

him into public notice, and he grieved on his friend's account over the great artist's unexpected death.

But the affairs of life took an unforeseen turn with Girolamo.

A certain Italian nobleman, who had been made a bishop by the pope, about this time reached the higher dignity of cardinal, and consequently was to go and form part of the Roman court. A palace was provided for him, and an establishment formed on the princely scale usual with cardinals. A "Maestro di Casa," or master of the house, was required, and the office was bestowed on Girolamo. This immediately raised him from an obscure position to one of considerable power and influence. Unlike too many who, when themselves successful, are apt to forget others less fortunate, his first thought was of Salvator, who he resolved to assist if he could. He wrote to him from Rome, and proposed that he should come there. "There are numbers

of unused rooms in this enormous mansion," he wrote, "so that I can place one at your service. It will be scantily furnished, but enough so for your purpose. Come and live here. You can paint all day, and walk about the picture galleries all the evening, and who knows but that the cardinal will be the means of bringing you forward, if by luck we can introduce you into his notice."

The offer was too tempting a one to refuse, and Salvator packed up his things and went on board a felucca which was going from Naples to Rome. He found a warm welcome from his friend, who established him in the promised room, which was comfortless enough ; but it quite satisfied Salvator, who was glad to be again in Rome, and under the same roof with his friend. In the midst of his many duties, as head of the extensive household, Girolamo often found time to pay him a visit whilst he sat working at his easel. He introduced him also to a Neapolitan priest named

Simonelli, who was likewise in the retinue of the cardinal. There was a chord of sympathy between the three men, because they came from the same native place. For some months, however, there was no opportunity of forwarding Salvator's interests in any way.

It happened that, when he had been in Rome about a year, the cardinal in whose establishment he was residing was made Bishop of Verterbo, and consequently had to go and visit his see, and preach in the cathedral. Girolamo knew that his eminence talked of having the loggia of the episcopal palace at Verterbo painted, and it occurred to him that if only he could persuade Salvator to go in the retinue of the cardinal to Verterbo, he might have a chance of introducing him into notice when there, and procure for him the execution of the proposed painting. So he sought him in his large desolate chamber, where he was sitting as usual at his easel, which was placed in one of the windows.

"Salvator," he said, "I have to make a proposal to you. Come to Verterbo in the cardinal's train, and it may lead to your being employed to paint the loggia I was telling you about."

Salvator shook his head. "Leave me here," he said. "I can't endure the idea of making one in a great man's train. I should fancy myself a feather in a peacock's tail. Besides, what business should I have there. His eminence doesn't want a poor artist running after him."

"His eminence leaves it entirely to me who to take and who to leave. He has no more idea than that head you are drawing how many inhabit his house. An artist is a common appendage to a cardinal's household, and he knows you are here, though as yet he has asked no questions about you. But put up some of your drawings and come with us, for good luck may follow in consequence."

So it was settled, and in course of time all

was ready for departure. The journey of a cardinal in those days resembled that of a royal prince. He never moved without a retinue of about one hundred persons, including his chaplains and ecclesiastics. The carriage was made of gilded wood and glass, lined with crimson velvet. A silver bedstead, which easily took to pieces, was usually taken, together with abundance of eider-down mattresses and pillows. Services of china for breakfast and dinner, and plenty of plate and glass, were considered indispensable for his comfort and dignity at the inns. As the procession travelled somewhat slowly along the roads, it must have been an imposing sight to the humbler travellers that met it, who were expected to uncover and stand aside whilst it passed. A troop of cavalry went first and last, a really necessary precaution in that age of brigands and robbers, who were ever on the watch for plunder. The splendid coach with its glass panels displayed the

figure of the cardinal in his rich dress, which was shown to advantage by the black habits of his chaplains who sat by his side. Then came the gentlemen of the household and many retainers. Add to this the tinkling of the bells round the horses' necks, and an idea may be formed of Cardinal Brancaccia's retinue when he paid his first visit to his new see.

Salvator felt considerably humiliated by forming one in the train. His place lay amongst the retainers, and it is easy to understand that his independent spirit would be galled by the position, feeling as he did that he had talents which ought to enable him to rise high above many of those who surrounded him. Could he have looked into his own future, he would have seen that the name of the ostentatious cardinal would be consigned to oblivion, except through the circumstance of his name being connected with that of Salvator's.

Girolamo watched his opportunity at Verterbo, and asked leave to present to the cardinal the artist who had followed him to Rome, and was now forming a part of his train. His eminence sent for him, looked at his drawings, and at once entrusted to him the painting of his loggia. So well pleased was he with his work, that before it was nearly finished he engaged him to paint an altar-piece for a church in Verterbo, leaving the choice of the subject to himself. Salvator choose that of St. Thomas and his incredulity. This occupied him about a year, and he completed it to the satisfaction of his patron, who watched its progress with interest. He would probably have found him further employment, but Salvator's spirit chafed under the patronage of a man who did not really understand painting, nor was he at all enamoured of his dreary room in the old mansion.

"I am not in my element here," he said to his friend Girolamo one day. "You have

done your best for me, and I am truly grateful to you ; but I will go back to Naples and take rooms on the hill there. My ideas will be freer there than here, and I will send my paintings to Rome, and you will help to dispose of them for me."

"You are impatient, Salvator," replied his friend, laughing ; "but once make up your mind to do or not to do a thing, and I know there is no turning you. You are still the same Salvator who told the principal of the college Somasca that study logic and philosophy you neither could nor would."

So they parted ; but Girolamo remained his firm friend, and continued to watch for opportunities of serving him.

There used to be every year two exhibitions in Rome, upon the feasts of St. Joseph and St. John. They took place at the Pantheon, and thither the artists of Rome used to send their pictures. There was considerable competition as to the arranging and placing of

the drawings, every one wanting, of course, a good position for his own. Moreover, it required a certain amount of interest to get them admitted at all, on account of space, for a good deal of room was occupied by noblemen taking these opportunities of displaying their property in the shape of the *chefs-d'œuvre* of the great masters. Hitherto, Salvatore had never attempted to enter the list of competitors, although he had been urged to do so by his friends.

"I do not mean to send a picture there," he said to Girolamo one day, "till I have done one that will take Rome by storm."

The time had come that he resolved to put his pencil to work in earnest for this purpose.

He choose for his picture "Prometheus chained to a rock, being devoured by vultures"—a terrible subject; but he wished for a sensational one. He desired to attract attention to what he was resolved should be well worthy

of it. He threw all his interest and talent and imagination into his work. When it was finished he wrote to Girolamo—

“My ‘Prometheus’ is finished at last. Can you secure it a good place in the Pantheon? I feel as if I were throwing into a lottery. Shall I win or lose?”

Girolamo had sufficient interest to get the picture hung in a conspicuous situation. In a few days the Pantheon was thrown open. Girolamo watched the effect produced by his friend’s picture with great interest. It was all he could desire. A crowd was always round it. Day after day it was the same. All Rome flocked to it.

“Have you seen the ‘Prometheus’?” was the question that passed from tongue to tongue. “Wonderful!” “Who painted it?” “What is the name of the painter?” Such were the questions asked every instant. All the nobility of Rome went to see it. Then came up the story, which Girolamo took care should

be known, about Lanfranco buying "Hagar in the desert," done by the same artist.

"Return to Rome, Salvator!" wrote Girolamo; "your time is come! 'Prometheus' is the admired of all beholders, and their name is legion. Every hour in the day crowds stand before it. Come and witness your own triumph."

Salvator went at once. He was offered his old apartment in the Brancaccia palace, but he disliked the idea of being patronized by the cardinal. His spirit was too free and independent to be able to endure it. He wished to rise by his own effort entirely. So he hired rooms in the Via Babbuina, and there he established himself.

He had innumerable visitors. All were curious to see and know the man who had painted "Prometheus." He became popular, for he was an agreeable companion in all ways. He could play the lute well; and he recited poetry beautifully. It was the custom at that

time to form parties for the purpose of listening to recitations, and Salvator's rooms became a centre for this purpose.

He formed one or two firm friendships at this time, and to outward appearance he had attained to a position which might have satisfied any young man who had been struggling for fame, especially as each picture he painted not only sold for a high price, but increased his reputation. True, however, is the proverb, "All that glisters is not gold."

Salvator had his own reasons for feeling that his hour of triumph was not yet come. He used always to declare that men gifted with great talents ought, if their talents were duly cultivated, to claim equality with those who the mere accidents of wealth and birth had placed in a high sphere. His natural bent was decidedly a republican one, and he was inclined to look severely on the extreme pomp and exclusiveness of the Roman court and nobility.

Now he noticed that many of those men who were willing enough to attend his evening parties and to come to his studio to watch the progress of the paintings, while one after another created a sensation the moment they appeared, were yet shy of him at other times. He found that cardinals and others of rank and fashion, who had been with him perhaps only the day before talking familiarly, would pass with a distant bow, or even appear not to see him as he drove by them. They did not choose to admit him into the intimacy of their inner circle. Salvator noted all this. He was extremely ambitious and proud. His haughty spirit could not brook this mixture of courting and slighting, and he studied a method of retaliation, which was both unwise and unworthy of one so gifted.

He commenced a new picture on a large scale.

"What is the subject you have sketched out?" asked his intimate friend Mario Ghigi.

"I shall call it 'La Fortuna,'" said Salvator, "and in due course you will see and understand its meaning. It shall explain itself."

It gradually grew under his hand. He represented Fortune as a fair woman pouring from a cornucopia a shower of riches, honours, crosses, mitres, crowns, jewels, money, etc. Below, eagerly watching for these prizes, he drew numbers of sanguinary birds of prey, reptiles, unclean beasts, etc. These, whilst greedily snatching at the treasures falling amongst them, trample on and spurn with their feet the symbols of liberty and independence. Books, globes, pens, pencils, etc., lie broken and neglected. On the heads of some swine are placed mitres. An ass has princely orders and stars round his neck. Wolves, vultures, cormorants struggle for coronets and royal crowns.

Strange to say, only Salvator's most intimate friends saw through the intense satire conveyed in the picture. He hung it up in

his own picture gallery, and all who had the *entree* to the gallery flocked to see it. Its exquisite painting so delighted every one, that in an evil moment he resolved to send it to the Pantheon, as the feast of St. John was arriving, and the usual exhibition about to take place. He probably trusted to the general public being as obtuse about its meaning as private gazers had been, and thought that if princes, and cardinals, and nobles had seen it without detecting that they themselves were the subjects of the satire, no others were likely to do so.

He was mistaken. No sooner was the picture exhibited than it produced a far greater sensation than the "Prometheus" or any of the others had done. The shrewd Roman people saw through its meaning at once. They were charmed as much with the satire concealed in it as with the talent displayed in its execution.

Whispers went round from one to another.

These changed to louder tones, and then grew into vociferous admiration and amusement.

Salvator had enemies who were jealous of him, and who were quite ready to do him an ill turn. Now was their time. They mingled with the crowd, and pointed out certain likenesses which had been hitherto undetected, but certainly existed; the marvellous skill of the painter having contrived to introduce the peculiar nose of a well-known bishop, and the equally remarkable eye of another, in the physiognomy of some swine who were wallowing in pearls and flowers. An ass was treading laurel and myrtle under his feet, and there was a strange resemblance in his face to a pompous cardinal on whom honours had been heaped; and in an old goat lazily reposing on a bed of roses, some declared they could detect the features of the pope himself!

It was not long before the higher powers heard unpleasant rumours about "La Fortuna." They felt they had been duped when they

had praised the picture in the artist's own gallery; and a sense of humiliation mingled with wrath and indignation at the ridicule and satire showered on them by the drawing.

"Excuse me for saying so, Salvator," said his friend Ghigi, as he entered his studio a day or two after "La Fortuna" had been thus talked about; "but methinks you have shown yourself almost as great an ass as the one in the picture, for having sent it to the Pantheon for public gaze. I am afraid you have done yourself harm."

"At all events, happen what will," replied Salvator, "I shall have done others good by presenting them with a looking-glass in which to see themselves truly, probably for the first time in their lives. But I acknowledge I did unwisely in sending the drawing to the Pantheon; however, I must abide the consequences."

These were more serious than he anticipated. No one called upon him; no one sent him any

invitations. The inmates of carriages invariably saw something on the opposite side of the way to look at when he approached. Except by one or two tried friends, he was deserted. The lower orders alone extolled him. They even cheered him now and then. They called him their "Champion," a most dangerous title, and associated the idea of sedition and rebellion with his name in the minds of those whom he had offended, and who were in the humour to catch at any stone to throw at him. Rancour against him ran higher and higher, till at length the conclave of the terrible Inquisition itself prepared to sit in judgment upon him !

Again, as when he fell into brigand hands, was the life of our thoughtless, impetuous hero in great danger, for the Inquisition had often been known to imprison for less offences than this of which he was now guilty, and imprisonment not unfrequently meant that the prisoner was to be seen no more ; but

whether he was doomed to die a natural or a tortured death, only those who were in the secrets of that tribunal would ever know. The power of the Inquisition was unlimited over its victims.

A dark cloud, indeed, now hung over Salvator's head. Fortunately for him, his friend Don Mario Ghigi was powerful. He saw the blow that was about to fall on one to whom he was sincerely attached, and he threw himself between him and the Inquisition. He came to Salvator, and insisted on his writing out a careful explanation of the ill-fated picture, explaining that he meant no personality, but that he wished to pourtray generally the blindness of fortune, the success of mediocrity, and the too great neglect of genius, talent, worth, and independence.

This averted the actual storm, but it did not turn aside the pique and angry feelings which were still so fresh in injured minds. Rome was evidently no longer either a safe or a

pleasant abode for him, and his friends urged him to leave without an hour's loss of time, for though immediate danger was over, yet he was now a marked man, and sure to be imprisoned on the first possible excuse.

Exactly at this juncture there arrived an invitation from the Court of Florence to Salvator to go and execute some great pictures, promising him a settled annual income during his residence there, besides the price for his pictures.

Salvator at once agreed to go, but he felt bitterly leaving Rome, which suited his taste as a residence better than any other place, and where he had some true friends.

"I go," he said, on the morning of his departure, "but I will spend the end of my life here, and here I will die."

At Florence he was received with open arms. He took a handsome house, collected around him men of talent and learning, and entertained them often of an evening. All

day he worked in his studio with closed doors, and obtained enormous prices for his pictures. His best he sent to Rome to be exhibited in the Pantheon, for he hoped to keep up his name in the city he so loved.

"I will show the Romans," he said, "that though they have proscribed my person, genius is a thing beyond their power to persecute."

His heart so yearned after his friends in Rome, that in about three years time he declared he must go there and see them and the dear old city again, though but for a few days.

He wrote to ask if there would be any danger in his doing so; and received for answer that he must on no account set his foot in Rome; that he had bitter enemies there who would take care he did not leave it again alive. Unfounded charges of sedition and secret plotting with the lower orders would at once be laid against him if he appeared there, and that he must consider

Rome as a spot of which he must keep entirely clear.

Salvator read the letter gloomily and with much disappointment. The very impossibility of going only fanned the intense desire he felt to be there. Always impetuous and impatient of being thwarted, he suddenly flung down his brush, walked up and down his studio rapidly for a quarter of an hour, then having apparently made up his mind to carry out some scheme he had been planning, he rang the bell for his servant, and desired him to order post horses to set out for Rome in a few hours. He then sat down and wrote a number of notes to take with him, and in a very short time he was speeding along as fast as four horses could take him.

He so arranged his journey as to arrive in Rome after dark, when no one would be able to recognize him, and drove at once to the gardens of the Vigria Navicella, which were closed by that hour. He knew the cus-

todian, and a bribe easily gained him admittance. Then he arranged quickly for getting up a supper in the gardens by the light of the almost full moon. Meanwhile he sent off his notes by messengers found by the custodian. In these he had invited his friends, to the number of about sixteen, to meet him at once in the gardens.

Fearing that the heedless, impetuous artist was in some fresh scrape, and had been ordered out of Florence as he had before to fly Rome, they all hastened to the place of rendezvous, and there found Salvator full of spirits and overjoyed at seeing them again. They sat down to supper, as sumptuous a one as money and haste could provide, and thoroughly enjoyed each other's society for some time. Then, at dawn of day, the host bade them all good-bye, and getting into his carriage drove off to Florence, where he arrived without any one there knowing that he had quitted it even for an hour.

It was soon after this freak that his friends begged him, as they had often done before, to sit for his likeness. Salvator had always refused.

"My paintings shall represent me," he used to say. "Posterity may get some good by looking at *them*, but what would be the use of sending down my *face* for it to gaze at? Besides, if I wished ever so much to be taken, I could not be bored by sitting for my portrait. I never can sit still for long together, nor keep my countenance steady for five minutes."

His friend Lippi, the great painter, did his best to persuade him to change his mind, but in vain.

Lippi was in the habit of being read to whilst he drew, and kept a reader for this purpose. It happened one day when Salvator called on him that he had just stretched a new canvas for a fresh picture. Lippi was a poet as well as painter, and his reader was

beginning to read aloud a poem he was about to publish.

Salvator, as he entered, nodded to Lippi, put his finger on his lip, and made a sign to the reader not to stop. He sat down in the carved oak gothic window-seat, which had some richly stained glass in it. Throwing back his head to rest on the oak panel, he soon became absorbed in listening to the poem.

Lippi was standing at his easel and about to put on the new canvas the first strokes of his intended drawing, when his eye caught Salvator's face and head lighted up by the brightly stained glass. His fine features being in perfect repose, and his eye beaming with expression from the interest he was feeling in what was being read, in an instant Lippi changed the subject of his picture, and with wonderful rapidity and accuracy he sketched his head, face, and bust, whilst Salvator supposed he was commencing

a totally different subject, on which they had consulted together the day before.

From this sketch he produced an exact and exquisitely painted likeness of his friend, which after his death sold for an enormous price.





SALVATOR ROSA AT THE ZENITH OF HIS FAME.



CONCLUSION.

WE will pass over a period of about twenty-five years before we again introduce our hero to the reader, who we will ask to accompany us to the Pincian Hill, then, as now, the fashionable promenade of Rome.

Here, one evening towards the latter end of the seventeenth century, might be seen a gay crowd of the *élite* of the ancient city, consisting of princes, cardinals, monks, friars, and gaily dressed ladies of various ranks. Some were walking, some driving, and others standing in groups, or reclining on the chairs and benches placed for general accommodation.

Amongst the multitude there was one group that a stranger would have remarked as more noticeable than the others, by the number of gentlemen of distinguished appearance, who were in the company of a tall, handsome looking man in the decline of life, dressed in a black velvet coat and cap, from underneath which escaped his long curling black hair tinged with grey. Genius shone forth in the flashing eye and expressive countenance as he sat on a low chair, surrounded by numerous well-known men of rank and letters, with whom he was keeping up conversation of apparently an interesting nature, to judge from the eagerness of his companions to draw out his ideas and ask his opinions.

Salvator had indeed fought his way to fame, as from boyhood he had always declared he could and would do. He had conquered all difficulties, outlived envy, and could boast of having the highest persons in the land desirous of being included in his acquaintance.

He had never ceased to feel a longing to return to Rome; and at last, when years had removed many of his former enemies, and so weakened the remembrance of "La Fortuna" that those who figured in it no longer bore any grudge, he thought he might venture to return. He had powerful friends there who paved his way, and assured him there was no longer any cause for fear, and so he came back, having risen to the summit of fame as an artist, with a matured judgment and a mind highly cultivated and refined by his past intercourse in Florence with men of letters and learning.

He took a house on the Pincian Hill, furnished it superbly, and appropriated one of the largest rooms as a picture gallery for his own paintings. He no longer had any need to send them for public exhibition as in former days. His prices now were so enormous, that only the wealthiest nobles could purchase them; yet his orders were far too numerous for execution.

He was extremely generous, and glad to do a kind action. He called one day at the house of a poor musician, who was practising on a miserable, cracked string piano. Salvator could not help making a wry face at the notes it produced.

"I know it is a miserable instrument, signor," said the poor man, who had a delicate wife and several children to support, "but I can afford nothing better."

"Stop a bit," said Salvator, "and I will turn the instrument into the most valuable one in all Rome."

The musician stared. He thought his visitor must be making fun of him ; but Salvator was as good as his word. He went home and procured such materials as he required for his purpose ; then returning, he sat down and commenced painting a landscape on the inside of the lid, which when finished made the old harpsichord really invaluable. It was sold immediately for a very high price,

and often afterwards it passed from hand to hand for considerable sums. It is still in existence, and is highly valued by its possessor.

Salvator's career from boyhood to advanced age had been a remarkable instance of what perseverance and resolve, united to great natural talent, can effect under the most disadvantageous circumstances. He may truly be said to have fought a great battle, and to have gained a great victory.

His health began to decline soon after the period of which we have just spoken, and about a year later, in 1673, he died. His works live to immortalize his name.

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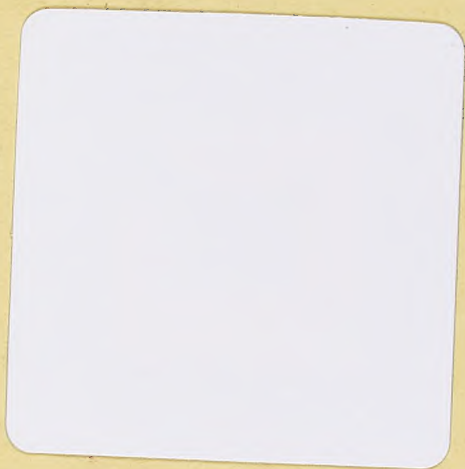
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